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ITALY

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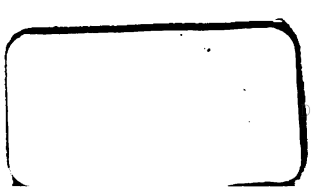

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When Mother Lets Us Travel

IN ITALY

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WHEN MOTHER LETS US TRAVEL IN ITALY

BY

CHARLOTTE M. MARTIN

Illustrated from Photographs

NEW YORK
MOFFAT, YARD & COMPANY
1912

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To

ELEANOR, JOHN and CHARLOTTE

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PREFACE

Perhaps the wanderings of an American family in Italy will interest not only those who can follow in their footsteps, but also those who must stay at home.

The journeying of an entire family is rarely a mere holiday, and in the case of Mr. and Mrs. Carter, and their children, business of an important nature dictates their route. Mr. Carter has been sent abroad by his native state, to study the designing and building of foreign cities.

Sometimes, he is able to make his work interesting to his children; often he can allow himself a holiday, and join them in excursions to places that hold little promise of help to those who are dreaming of a " City Beautiful " in Texas.

It is to be hoped that the Italian experiences of Alice, Jack and the twins, will lead their friends to follow their fortunes into France and Holland, and the other fascinating countries of Europe.

THE AUTHOR.

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When Mother Lets Us Travel in Italy

CHAPTER I

GENOA

"It is quite easy to see where the cold comes from." Mr. Carter was standing by the rail of the steamer *Cobra,* as she slipped past the shores of Monte Carlo, Mentone and the Italian Riviera. The Mediterranean was smooth as a lake, and the gay little towns along its borders were brilliant with southern colors, but far to the north the Maritime Alps rose, clear and snow-covered, against the sky. From their distant peaks windy messengers of cold were reaching down to the summer-like sea.

"I thought it was always warm in the south, Father. If it is cold like this in Genoa, what shall we do?"

"Follow your first thought, Jack, and go farther south, yet, in pursuit of that warmth in which you believe. Where are your mother and the other children?"

"Alice is wandering about with Mademoiselle somewhere, and Mother has got the twins snuggled down in a warm corner, telling them stories of the old sea princes of Genoa. She has been reading a

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lot about them lately, some of it to me. They must have been a jolly, independent set."

"You will see their palaces to-morrow. I am afraid it will be too late when we land to get more than the most general notion of the town, but everyone says that the best view is from the sea."

"You always say 'sea,' Father. Didn't those old people know the ocean?"

"Well, Columbus had to know it, to get across to our part of the world, and he was a Genoa man. Generally speaking, though, the people of the Mediterranean kept to their own waters, they did not really like to be out of sight of land, and they preferred to put into harbor for over night, just as we are going to do."

Indeed it was nearly dusk when the *Cobra* ran in between the great breakwaters that guard Geno's beautiful harbor. The crescent-shaped town, aglow in the sunset light, lay beyond the dark water, every twinkling light reflected in its depths.

"It looks as if some of the buildings were as high as New York, and there's a real trolley," cried Alice. "I don't believe that Italy is so very old, or different."

"This Italy, all one country, as we are going to see it, is not so very much older than I am," laughed Mr. Carter, as he marshalled his family down the gangway toward the Customs Inspectors. Alice looked at him, wide-eyed. This was no time for questions, however, for eager, gesticulating lit-

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tle men were peering into the trunks and hand-luggage.

Mrs. Carter never quite lost her nervousness under Customs inspection. "Dogana may sound much more gentle than Customs House, but it means pretty much the same thing after all," she wailed, as she helped Mademoiselle crush back the children's crumpled clothing into the hastily opened trunks.

"Mother, Mother, what's that?" teased Robert, pulling at her coat. "Is it a Sea Prince?"

"He is certainly dressed for the part, but I fancy he is some kind of a policeman."

Even the last word could not discourage Robert in his eagerness for a nearer view. He planted himself directly in front of the gorgeous Carabinere, gravely studying each detail of the curious costume; cocked hat, tailed coat, sword and white gloves. The encounter was silent, though friendly. Nothing can disturb the dignity of the Carabiniere when on duty. Some of the stolid calm of the official must have communicated itself to the child, for not until they were near the hotel, did Robert open his lips.

"I think," he said sleepily, "that he would have smiled if we had had a little more time. He looked as if he were going to."

Even in the morning light, Alice was certain that Italy was just as new as Texas. Their hotel was not so unlike many others they had seen, and steam heat and bath rooms seemed quite like home. Even

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out of doors, Genoa looked rather like an American town at first sight. The wide Via Roma seemed so like any other wide, modern street that Mr. Carter laughingly drew his family back into the hotel from the big entrance.

"We will go out the back way," he said. "The Galleria Mazzini has much more local flavor about it than any mere street."

The long glass-covered gallery, with its brightly decorated shops on either side, was certainly different from an ordinary street, and the children were full of questions.

"Was Mazzini a man, or a place?" asked Alice.

"A man, dear," answered her mother. "He was born in Genoa, I believe. He was one of the great patriots and thinkers that made United Italy possible. You will see his name everywhere, with Cavour, the statesman, Garibaldi, the dashing soldier, and Victor Emanuel, the King."

"As good Americans," said Mr. Carter, "we must ignore this modern history, and these modern men, and make our first pilgrimage to the ancestral house of Christoforo Colombo, though that is not quite the way we are used to spelling his name. However the Italian fashion should be the right one."

Their way took them around the Theater of Carlo Felice, past the equestrian statue of Garibaldi, and across the wide, dusty Piazza Deferrari, that every traveler learns by heart during the first few days of his stay in Genoa. They found the house

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of Columbus a worthy object of pilgrimage, for it proved to be tall and very narrow like so many of the old Genoese houses; a mere slice of a house, only two windows wide, so that the elaborate marble tablet, that records its history and fame, almost encroaches upon the neighbors on either side, in its endeavor to tell its story worthily.

"It is a relief to see an old red brick house like this," said Mrs. Carter, "so much of the newer Europe is light stone and stucco."

"If this one house is so unlike the modern world, there may be others in Genoa," said Mr. Carter. "Let us find them, if we can." So they turned their backs upon the wide, open spaces, where the old town is re-making itself into the new, and the sun shines bright and warm, and plunged into the network of narrow streets that stretches down toward the harbor. There they found it was winter indeed, for the wind from the snow-topped mountains seemed to have found its favorite playground in this busy quarter, where it swept viciously round corners, carrying everything before it along the crowded thoroughfares.

"It is curious," said Mrs. Carter, "but these buildings, though only five and six stories high, look almost as dignified and imposing as our home 'sky-scrapers.' I suppose the narrow, sunless streets help the illusion. Your high buildings of last night, Alice, must have been up on the hills, behind the town."

Whatever the height of the buildings, the center

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of old Genoa is as busy as any American town, and an endless procession of clerks, messenger boys, and men with portfolios under their arms, is always clattering over the rough pavements.

"I feel as if we were very much out of place, here," said Mrs. Carter to her husband, as their family group drifted from one street to another. "Surely, we are in everybody's way."

"We shall lose our own way, in this labyrinth of streets, unless we find some clue. Let us play a game about it."

"How can you make a game of getting lost, Father?" asked Alice, who was born with a gift of seeing difficulties as well as pleasures.

"Well, you see, there are all sorts of people hurrying back and forth, in and out of doors: suppose we choose one, and follow him until he disappears; then we can stand about a little, and one of us can choose another 'leader' to follow. In the course of time, someone will lead us toward something we recognize. If that doesn't happen, or if we get too tired, we can take a cab and ride home. You choose the first leader, Jack."

"I think that little chap, with the green package under his arm, looks as if he were awfully busy about something."

"Very well, we will take him for a guide, only we must not let him know we are following him."

So the game began, and a merry one it proved, for Jack's choice had been a good one. In and out of narrow streets, and through crumbling old arch-

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Via San Lorenzo—Genoa

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ways, they followed him, until one particularly black doorway swallowed him entirely.

"Now, it is Alice's choice."

"That is all very well, but Jack's leader has left us in a horrid old courtyard, and there isn't a soul in sight."

"You three can keep up the game," interrupted Mrs. Carter, "but the twins and I are tired, and must get back to the hotel. Mademoiselle will think us lost, as indeed we are. What are you going to do about it, Alice?"

"There's my choice now," she answered with a laugh, and, sure enough, out of the big, black doorway, popped the same busy boy, smiling gaily at "the strangers on foot," these last being an unfailing source of curiosity to the Italian street boy, who is more accustomed to seeing travelers who view towns from the safe vantage of a carriage. Standing directly in front of Mrs. Carter, he let off a breathless, unpunctuated string of Italian.

"What *does* he say?" she asked.

Once more came the unbroken burst of eloquence, and this time it seemed to have taken on a familiar ring.

"I believe the clever little rascal is numbering over the list of the hotels," said Mr. Carter. "Let's try him. Hotel Isotta?" this with a world of questioning in his voice.

"Si, si, Signore," and the lad started for the further end of the court, with every appearance of confidence.

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"After all," said Alice, "we might as well follow him, when we think we know where he is going, as when we didn't know at all."

Their journey was short. A few sharp turns, with a significant pause before a massive building, with a black and white façade, a single tower and a dome, that their guide announced was "La Cathedrale"; a short walk along a narrow street that led to a charming terrace fronting an old church, also solemnly announced as "San Matteo, la cappella della famiglia Doria"; finally a merry climb up a narrow street that was a series of low steps, and behold! they were once more opposite the statue of Garibaldi and the theater. A short walk along the Via Roma, and the Carters were safe at their hotel door, and their smiling guide enriched by several coppers.

He bowed low in thanks, and stated firmly: "Stephano!"

"That is a bright little fellow, and it is interesting to know his name, but I don't suppose we shall ever see him again, in this big city." Mrs. Carter had a warm heart toward all children, and was already beginning to miss the pleasant thought of following Stephano. She little understood his kind, and their knowing devotion to foreigners of apparently unlimited coppers. During all the days of their stay in Genoa, Stephano dogged their footsteps. They would find him outside their hotel door in the morning, or waiting by some church steps, or gallery entrance, ready to take them to any

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place they named. A friendly intimacy, founded upon gestures and smiles, sprang up between him and the younger Carter children, and Robert and Kate began to pick up phrases of Italian, with the unconscious ease that goes with being only eight years old.

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CHAPTER II

GOOD-BY TO GENOA

"They look more like every-day houses than palaces, to me, Father."

Mr. Carter and Jack had been out for an after-breakfast walk, and were returning by way of Via Garibaldi, that narrow street darkened by the high walls of some of the most interesting palaces in Genoa.

"They do look rather like town houses in a block, but much of their beauty is in the great interior courts. They were the homes of the rulers of the town, your favorite sea princes. These men had ships that traded with Constantinople; and ships that fought Pisa, Venice, and even the Saracens, when they came a-ravaging out from the coasts of Spain. They had colonies in Corsica and Sardinia, and trading posts away in Syria and Cyprus."

"Do their descendants live here, now?"

"Some of them still keep their palaces, but in many cases the families have died out, and in one or two instances, they have transferred their interests to other towns, where they have other homes. The Dorias, for instance, have intermarried with another famous family, and have lived in Rome for many years. You remember their huge place, here, and

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the statue of the great Doria as Neptune, that we saw the other day?"

"Yes, that seemed more like a real palace. The railroad would astonish the old Admiral, if he could see it as it is to-day, wouldn't it? Didn't he look cold, though, up there in the wind, with only Neptune's clothes on? If anybody made an ancestor of mine look like that, I think I should want to go and live in some other town."

"Some of his family owned this house on our right. It is now the Town Hall, but 'Palazzo Municipale' sounds much more in keeping with its style. Then further along, on either side of the street, are the Palazzo Rosso, and the Palazzo Biancho, the Red and the White Palaces. They are now the property of the town, and are public museums. We will go and get your mother and the other children, and see if we can not visit a gallery or two before we take our tram ride, around the base of the hills, in the upper part of the town.

In half an hour they were all at the entrance of the Palazzo Rosso, ready for their excursion into the great days of Genoa's past. The picture gallery is on the third floor, and no better means could be invented for introducing the stranger to the specialty of Genoa, her stately interior courts, with their magnificent stairways, and wonderful carved balustrades.

"Surely these houses were built for entertaining on a grand scale," said Mrs. Carter. "Can not you see these stairs and landings filled with the passing

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groups of men and women, in silks and satins, just like their pictures here on the walls?"

"Are these really their portraits, Mother?" asked Alice, looking with new interest at the dignified canvases of Rubens and VanDyck that smiled down upon these strangers that had found their way into their home.

"Yes, those great artists came to Genoa for a season or two just as certain foreign artists come to America, to-day, to paint the people of note. The rest of the pictures represent the taste of the family from time to time, and you see the taste changed with the years, just as taste changes to-day. By and by, you will see galleries of pictures that will interest you as pictures, only, aside from their story or their owners, but now, if I were you, I would think of these as coming as near to finding the people of the house at home as we can."

They wandered from one stately room to another, without attempting to study details, for both Mr. and Mrs. Carter felt that it was better for the children to have a general, if vague, idea of painted walls and ceilings, gilded cornices and wonderful window casings, rather than the fatigue of examining everything.

The White Palace equaled its rival in the matter of imposing courtyard, and stupendous staircase, and the spoiled children of America groaned for the comfortable elevators of their native land.

"It is just this one thing that has made me decide on what ship we shall sail to Naples," said

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Mr. Carter. "The Italian Line is the only one that has its office on the entrance floor. After I had climbed more long flights of stairs than I like to think of, only to be told that no boat could meet my needs, I decided that the office on the ground floor, was the one for us. We are going on the *Sardegna* that sails the day after to-morrow, at ten o'clock. That will be an easy starting hour for us all."

"How long will it take, Father?"

"Only over the one night, Kate, you won't have time even to imagine that you are sea-sick."

"Do we get into Naples in the morning, then?"

"I am not sure about that. You see the boat goes on to New York, and as the official record of the voyage does not begin until they leave Naples, they do not care what time they make up to then."

As they came out upon the street again, Robert spied Stephano standing in a near-by doorway. "Can't he go on the tram ride with us, Father?" he asked.

"Certainly, run and get him, he can show us the shortest way to the car."

The shortest way proved to be a "funiculare," or cable-railway, that jerked and stumbled its way up the hillside, and deposited the family well above the town, on a bit of curving roadway where Stephano bade them wait for the tram. They occupied the period of waiting in studying the wide view of Genoa at their feet. As Jack said, they were "half-way up the hills." Below them lay Genoa, "still

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stepping down hill," as Mrs. Carter said, "to meet her good friend, the sea." Crowded houses, the round dome and single tower of the Cathedral, the pretty Public Park, nearly beneath them, the wide roofs of the Hospital, and the lovely Romanesque tower of Santo Stephano, which their little Italian friend claimed for his very own, since he bore its name, all these they found in turn, calling gaily to one another at each new discovery of an old acquaintance. Beyond all, lay the harbor, glistening in the sunshine, busy with the sea life that made the town in the beginning, and keeps it gloriously alive to-day.

"Ecco" from Stephano made them turn to see the car that was spinning around the corner toward them. Once safely aboard, they settled themselves comfortably to enjoy the ever-changing view. The road skirted the hillside, in curves of varying sharpness and pitch, delighting Kate and Robert with its suddenness. With the mountains always above them to the right, and the sea always below them, to the left, they turned and twisted, following wide bends, that seemed to be taking them quite out into the country, only to turn and sweep them back toward the town. Finally, they dipped down to the sea, and "came to anchor," as Mr. Carter put it, not far from the railway station, not far, too, from the Doria Palace that was given to the great Admiral by the State, as a reward for driving the pirates from the Genoese shores.

"You had better say good-by to your chilly, old

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friend, the Neptune, children, for we shall not be seeing him again," said Mr. Carter.

The following morning, bright and early, the children were astir, and keen to be once more aboard ship. The *Sardegna* was billed to sail at ten A. M., but it was easy to see that no one concerned took that statement seriously. Hosts of emigrants, on their way to America, were crowding the dock, within a few moments of the official sailing time. Consular agents, and steamship agents were herding them like so many sheep. Everyone was excited, presents were being exchanged and kisses given, while everywhere voices rose shrill, or sank into wailing, at the sorrows of parting.

"It is curious," said a stout German, who stood near the Carters on the promenade deck, "that the Italian Government allows its people to emigrate from three ports only." He spoke English with ease though with much accent.

"I did not know that," answered Mrs. Carter, with a pleasant smile. "Why is it?"

"I can not tell, unless it is, perhaps, that they wish to watch over them. They may go from here, from Naples, and from Palermo, in Sicily. And from nowhere else. I, myself, go to Palermo, from Naples, but not as an emigrant." He chuckled at his obvious joke. "But, see. We are off."

In truth, the last bewildered Italian peasant had been pushed aboard, the last agent hustled ashore, and the steamer slid apologetically away from her pier, as if not wishing to draw attention to the fact

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that her sailing hour had long since passed. The sea was like glass, and it seemed to the wind-swept travelers from Genoa as if they grew warmer from the moment they turned their faces southward. All day the *Sardegna* glided over waters too blue to be true, while the Italian shore, rising to its white-topped mountains, melted from gray to blue, from blue to purple. The children snuggled down on deck, beneath the shelter of the saloon's high, domed skylight, and listened to Mademoiselle's story of the extraordinary man, who came from Corsica, "away there to the south," and grew so great that he played with Europe as if it were a game of chess. Mademoiselle's great-grandfather had served under Napoleon, and it was with something like a sob that she went on to tell the story of those other islands — one also in the sea over which they were sailing, the other far away — Elba and Saint Helena. Robert gloried in the escape from Elba, but he was sadly worried over the ex-Emperor's lack of enterprise at Saint Helena.

"Why didn't he do something?" he demanded. "Couldn't he cable, or send a wireless, or something?"

"Dear me! Master Robert, none of those things were invented then. He might as well have been in the African desert, or at the North Pole."

When the afternoon naps were over, and the children came up on deck, once more, for a breath of fresh air before supper, they found they were close to a rocky island, gray and shadowy in the

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growing dusk. The mainland was quite gone, and only one or two bits of land seemed to be floating in the mist, hovering near to keep the larger island company.

Alice slipped her arm through Jack's with an involuntary shiver. "Mademoiselle's hero must have been terribly lonely away off here, when it came night," she said.

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CHAPTER III

NAPLES

"Pardon, Mein Herr, but we are nearing Naples, and it is a pity that the little people should not see it from the water." The German gentleman, who spoke English, put down his coffee cup to smile, in friendly fashion, upon the row of bright faces opposite him. At the word Naples, all four children forgot their luncheon, and vanished as if by magic, scampering up on deck.

To be sure, they were much nearer Naples than they had supposed. The steamer was already passing the Island of Ischia, and the beautiful Bay of Naples was opening before their delighted eyes. As the *Sardegna* entered the Bay, the town of Naples, a mass of yellowish white buildings, with an occasional touch of old red brick, lay upon the hillsides to the left. Across, to the right, the green peninsula of Sorrento, dotted with white villages, bounded the view; while directly in front rose Vesuvius, a sharply defined mass of gray-blue against the deep blue sky of the southern noon-day, a lazy feather of steam drifting from her crater.

"It is our very first volcano," whispered Kate, "don't you think we had better wish on it?"

"Better wish that it will not have another erup-

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tion while you are here, little lady. I was here the last time it did that, and it was rather terrible."

The twins turned to find the tall white-haired man, who had sat near them at table, the night before, leaning against the railing beside them. "Please tell us about it," they begged. "Were you right up close to it?"

"I am thankful to say I was not, or I should not be telling you about it now. I was in my home, across there on the island," pointing to Capri, "but I saw all I wanted of it. At first, it was very beautiful, great big clouds of smoke, like branching palm trees, the fire from below lighting it from time to time. Then came the ashes and lava, and we kept hearing of the terrible destruction on the other side of the mountain, and everything grew black, and we were frightened, even over on Capri."

"Is it pretty over on your island?" asked Kate, slipping her hand into that of her new friend. "Why do you live there? You are not an Italian, are you?"

"No, I am an American, like yourself, but I came here to live when I was not much older than you are now. It is more like home to me than any other place."

"Kate! You mustn't ask people questions like that." Alice, feeling all the responsibility of the older sister, quite forgot her own habit of asking questions of anyone and everyone.

"Oh, he doesn't mind," replied Kate, with cheerful assurance. Smilingly he confessed that he did

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not mind at all, and turning to Mr. and Mrs. Carter, who had joined the group, he begged to be allowed to introduce himself. The name that he gave needed no repetition, for it is known on both sides of the world; but the children held to their first nickname for him, and, in the pleasant acquaintance that followed even their parents found themselves calling him "Mr. Painter-man," or even "Mr. Painter."

"Are you merely flying through Naples, as so many do, or are you making a long stay?" he asked.

"Business will keep me here some weeks," said Mr. Carter, "but I had thought that we would settle ourselves somewhere near Naples, rather than in it, Sorrento or Amalfi, perhaps."

"Settle in Sorrento, and visit Amalfi, and you will be making the best selection. Then, some day you can take the steamer over to Capri, and see me. We, who love Italy, like to have strangers see how lovely her homes are. So many people think of her only as a show place."

Slowly the big ship came to her pier, and the passengers were surrounded by the whirl and excitement of landing in southern Italy, where the very sunshine seems glad to welcome strangers. A flotilla of harbor boats gathered round the *Sardegna's* black hull, and bright-eyed peasants stood up in their swaying, bobbing cockle-shells, beguilingly offering fruit for sale, or holding wide-opened umbrellas, bottom up, to catch the possible pennies of the foreigners. Boatloads of singing people, the first the

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Carters had seen, came from far and near, cheerfully giving voice to the latest, and the oldest, of Neapolitan street songs, happily oblivious of the fact that the very next boatful was singing quite a different song, and that all were singing with more enthusiasm than sweetness. Once on the dock, an hotel official, splendid in gold lace, rescued the entire Carter family, gathered their luggage from a mob of porters, stowed them away in his huge 'bus, and carried them off in triumph to his hotel on the hill.

"It is worth while," sighed Mr. Carter, contentedly, "to give yourself up to them entirely, when they make you so comfortable."

"There doesn't seem to be much to help you in your work here, Father," said Jack, looking about him at the narrow streets, where crowds of peasants, well-dressed people, and ragged beggars jostled one another. As they turned toward the western part of the town, where the hotels and wide, new streets are, their way was blocked for a time by a cart piled high with cauliflowers of many hues. The donkey was gaily decked out with tassels of bright colored worsted, and every motion of his stubborn little head started numberless merry bells a-ringing. With infinite protests, much laughter, and, apparently, a demonstration of the entire unemployed of Naples, his majesty, the donkey, was beguiled out of the road, and the Carters, in their hotel omnibus, crossed the "Toledo," on their way to the hotel.

Jack took up his question, where the donkey-cart

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had interrupted it: "Was it your work that brought us here, Father? Why did you come?"

"There is a lot to learn in studying other people's difficulties," replied his father. "It is about as important to know how to open up an old town, as to lay out a new one. They have had, and still have, some serious problems of reconstruction here. We are just crossing an example, that dates back to the Spanish Occupation. This very 'Toledo,' which keeps its name they tell me in the speech of the people, even though it has become part of the newer Via Vittore Emanuele, was cut straight through a mass of old streets, by a Spanish Viceroy some time in the fifteen hundreds. They did their work well in those days. You see the old Spanish street is still capable of being a main thoroughfare of Naples."

After their early dinner, they sat out on the terrace of the hotel, watching the many lights of the town and harbor beneath them. The thread of steam from Vesuvius was tinged with red from time to time, as the flames flared up from the uneasy volcano below, and the sea was deepening to purple, under the fading light.

"Maps are delightful to study," said Mrs. Carter, "but it is better still to have a whole town spread out below one. Which way is Pompeii, I wonder?"

"I think it is well over to our left, beyond Vesuvius. How much do you children know about Pompeii?"

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"Mother read us some of the 'Last Days,' last winter, when she first knew we were coming here," answered Alice. "How much of that is true? Is there much left for us to see?"

"Really, Alice, the attitude of the young mind of to-day toward the historical novel, is sad to consider. Of course, we ought to pretend it is all true, in order to enjoy it thoroughly. Since you are so practical, however, we will not stop to think about the Poet, or the Beauty, the High Priest, or the Blind Girl, although they are all pleasant acquaintances of mine. What really happened was not unlike our own Mont Pelée, in Martinique, some years ago. After being quiet for so long that everybody thought it was extinct, Vesuvius suddenly burst into flame and smoke, and poured lava and ashes down toward the sea, burying the two towns of Pompeii and Herculaneum. That was as long ago as 79 A. D. Since then no one has thought of Vesuvius as extinct, for the eruptions have come at intervals all through the centuries down to our own day."

"Why did not someone write 'The Last Days of Herculaneum'?"

"Answering that, Jack, answers the last part of Alice's question, too. You see, the volcano did its work so well that most people forgot entirely that there had ever been two such towns at the base of the mountain. Another town grew up on the site of Herculaneum, which in spite of earthquakes and subsequent eruptions, still remained on the sea coast, while Pompeii had been left inland by these same

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convulsions of Nature. When the scientists, who had kept the records of the buried cities, came to search for treasure in the Eighteenth Century, they found that digging in Herculaneum meant piercing from forty to a hundred feet of solid lava. No wonder they have been content with sinking a few shafts, and bringing up such treasure as they could find in that way. Herculaneum is there, but we simply can not get at it. People do go down into the few buildings that are accessible, but it is a damp, dreary expedition.

"Pompeii is quite a different matter. No town was built over her ruins. Vesuvius had scattered more pumice and ashes than lava over her, and it took only a peasant's spade to bring to light the small bronze objects that drew the attention of the later world to this store-house of history. Excavations have gone on there for many years, under the Kings of Naples, and under private patronage. To dig systematically, however, needs money, and money was not always forthcoming. The work went on, in haphazard fashion for a long time, and every valuable 'find' was brought to the Museum, as the only safe place. Now the Government has taken over the work, and it is being splendidly done. The decorations, statues and so on are being left where they are found, whenever that is possible. We will take our luncheon, and drive out there for the whole day, as soon as I can arrange it. Now, you have had enough history, and talk, and night air. Scamper off to bed, every one of you. No, Alice,

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you are all the same age, when you are as tired as you are to-night. There is no sitting up for you and Jack."

Mademoiselle appeared to sweep her charges away to the land of dreams, and Mr. and Mrs. Carter were left to talk over plans in the soft, warm darkness.

"There are just a few things that you ought to see here in Naples, and then I should like you and the children to get away to some smaller, cleaner place, where you can have more garden room, more of the country, and a chance to take some drives."

"Won't you be able to come, too?"

"Certainly, but I shall have to leave you for several days at a time, and there is no need of your staying tied here, pleasant as it is. I have heard of a small hotel at Sorrento, built almost over the sea, where you can have an entire floor to yourselves, to say nothing of a tiled balcony, all your own, and a garden in common with the other guests."

"It sounds perfect. Shall you not write and make arrangements at once?"

"Truth to tell, all arrangements are made. I was only waiting for you to say it was 'perfect' before I confessed."

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CHAPTER IV

POMPEII

"The Museum first, and Pompeii afterwards, would be the sensible order, I suppose. To-day is so glorious, though, it is a pity to stop indoors. Can not you order a carriage, Robert, and let us start away for the whole day, with luncheon in our baskets?"

Any plan that involved a day out of doors, was sure of warm approval from all members of the family, so they were soon comfortably settled in two roomy cabs, of old-fashioned width and depth, and well on their way to what Jack called "long ago."

Their road lay through the lower town, passing the Piazza del Mercato, where the busy fish market covered the scene of the tragic end of Conradin, the last of a line of kings. Although they drove along the water front, the road was so lined with houses, and garden-walls that there was hardly a glimpse of country or sea, until after they had passed Torre del Greco. The busy life of the long street recompensed them, however, for any lack of view. The dark shops that lurked between the arches of the lower storeys; the festoons of macaroni that hung everywhere, in doorways, over windows, across narrow archways; the countless children, and the

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dogs of no recognizable breed — the children watched them all with fascinated eyes, for here was a life such as they had never seen before.

At Torre del Greco they found themselves so immediately beneath Vesuvius, that for the first time they realized what an unpleasant neighbor the threatening, uncertain mountain might become.

"I had had no idea it could look so overpowering," said Mr. Carter, looking up at the scarred, grim sides of the volcano. "How do people have the courage to build again and again on the ruins of each catastrophe!"

Beyond that little health resort, which perches so gaily on the débris of so many upheavals, they found the open road, and charming glimpses of Castellamare, and the shores of Sorrento. As they drew away from Vesuvius, the children were willing to take a more friendly view of it.

"After all," said Alice, looking back at the pale blue reaches of the mountain, "it doesn't look as if it ever really meant to do any harm. It looks so far away from everything, except Torre del Greco, that I don't see how ashes could ever get far enough to bury anything."

"'Mr. Painter-man' said they came down all round, and made even his island dark, and then something rolled down the other side of the mountain, and put out a town."

"That is more picturesque than exact, Kate," said Mrs. Carter, "but some towns really were 'put out,' and we are on our way to see one. Better

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still, it was done so long ago that it does not seem so dreadful as the things that happened only within a few years. Here we are, now. This is just like going into a museum, isn't it?" she added as Mr. Carter bought the necessary tickets at a little office, and secured the official guide. The carriages withdrew, to wait all day if need be, with the docile patience of the cab horse of all nations.

The guide greeted them in English, of the exact, careful type that belongs to all guides, and then preceded them up the slight incline that leads to Pompeii. A mere glance at the museum convinced Mrs. Carter that the smaller children had better stay out in the sunshine, since the memory of the "statues," as Robert called them, was not good to carry away in small minds. To Jack and Alice, however, their father pointed out the loaves of bread, just as they were found in the ovens, and the wonderful model of the dog, overtaken in full flight by the death from which he was fleeing.

Passing into the town, itself, their guide took them direct to the Forum, the natural gathering-place of all Roman citizens, in whatever city they dwelt. "What was it all used for, Mother?" asked Kate, bewildered by the broken columns, the wide dusty spaces, and the desolate, shattered walls.

"This was the center of the whole town, just as if we, at home, should take all our churches, all our theaters and banks, our markets and clubs, and build them around one square. See, no horses or chariots could get in here, because they put those

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pillars in the way, so it must have been quiet enough for people to hear one another speak." Turning to the guide she said: "These little people are not able to understand or enjoy all that would interest us. We must go very slowly, and let them play about, as we go. They will do no harm."

The guide's grave, sallow face broke into a smile: "I have little children at home, Signora."

So all the morning they ignored the routes of the regulation travelers, and wandered at will through the yellow-brown ruins, past street fountains, through baths, temples and market-places. The private houses attracted Mrs. Carter most, and she carefully traced out their design, with Alice and Jack. "It would be so sensible, for our own southern climate," she said, "this half-garden, half-house plan. You see they made the first court, with its small fountain, and tables, a sort of reception-room, where business was transacted, and formal guests were met by the master of the house. Then the inner court, with its fish-pond, fountain and flowers, was more like the 'patio' of a Spanish house, though even more secluded. The state dining-room was at one end of the inner court, and the bed-rooms must have been arranged along the sides, like the sections in a Pullman car."

"But, Mother, where were the kitchens, and the pantry, and all that?"

"Perhaps we can find out if we ask the guide. These particular ruins were cleared in the days when everything movable was taken away to the

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Museum in Naples. These small empty rooms might just as well be cupboards as kitchens."

The guide was stopping to show the younger children how the people of Pompeii used to lean over the street fountains to drink from the jet of water that spurted from a lion's mouth. The stone was deeply worn, where many bodies had pressed in their eagerness to reach the water.

"It is 'most like the way we have to drink at the school fountains at home," said Robert.

"You are right, son, there is nothing new under the sun. What are we coming to, now?"

The guide was leading them under a huge arched entrance, into what had been a hall of beautiful dimensions. "These were the public baths," he said, showing them the different apartments, with their elaborate system of heating, by means of hot-air spaces between the walls. "These," pointing to curious square holes in the thickness of the walls, in one of the rooms, "are what you would call 'lockers,' for the clothing. An American lady taught me that word." He took them to the women's bath, and showed them the semi-circular plunge bath. "Here, in the courtyard that was used for social gatherings, is a good place to eat your lunch." He pointed to a marble table under the shelter of the slanting roof.

Baskets were opened, paper parcels unwrapped, and a merry group gathered about the table, appetites quickened by the clear, fine air. There was no sound about them, for the guide had chosen a quiet

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spot, protected at this noon hour, from any straying parties of tourists.

"Wasn't there any upstairs, Father?" asked Robert, "everything seems broken off, and the walls have no windows."

"We shall find a few staircases and windows, I believe. You are right though, in saying that everything looks broken off. That is exactly what has happened. The few upper storeys that remained — and they had been built mostly for the servants' sleeping quarters — had to be removed during the excavation, to ensure the safety of the workers. After all, there was so much room to spare that they did not need to build up into the sky as we do. It must have been a pleasant life, with all its space and fresh air. It was busy too, with shops and theaters, and all that goes to make up town life in our own day. We are going over to the theater now, but you younger children had better wait here, with Mademoiselle, for there is a good deal of walking still to do. You will want to see the house at the other end of the town, where the pictures are still on the wall, and Alice can find the kitchen she is looking for."

Somewhat reluctantly, the twins settled down to amuse themselves with such things as the baths afforded, while the others walked to the theater, which is wonderfully well-preserved. Alice and Jack had never seen anything like it before, and listened intently while the guide explained to them the distinction between the different rows of seats,

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and the working of the curtain, which used to rise from the ground. The theater faced southeast, giving a lovely view across the plain, to the higher lands toward Castellamare. The Greeks and Romans can never have felt the lack of scenery in their theaters.

After wandering through the desolate, sandy barracks of the Gladiators, the Carters turned back once more into the streets of Pompeii, crossing many of them on the high stepping-stones, that were set far apart that the two-wheeled chariots might pass safely. "They must have been pretty good drivers in those days," was Jack's comment, as he looked along the straight narrow ways. "Don't you ever lose your way?" he asked the guide.

"Not now, but it took some training in the beginning. Tell me, where do you think your little brother and sister are, from here?"

Jack thought a moment, then pointed, rather uncertainly, toward a mass of brown buildings, well to his left.

"That is not so bad, 'though we should lose them, if we followed your pointing too closely. Come this way," and he led them through a courtyard that they had not seen before, showing them a wine shop, as well as many of the curious little stores, built into the walls of private houses, like swallows' nests in a cliff, having no connection with the great house itself. Finally, he took them back into the baths by what he called the back way.

On their walk to what Kate always referred to

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later as "the really, truly house," they made one pause, to glance into the House of the Faun, and for a while, it looked as if Kate and Robert would have to be left there, so charmed were they by the airy, bronze figure, lightly poised on the column of the fountain. At last, they consented to take up their line of march again, even if it led them a weary way quite across Pompeii. In the end, four rather footsore little people reached the beautiful court-yard of the "House of the Vetii." Here were statues, flowers, and even fountains, restored to their original positions. Mademoiselle and the twins settled contentedly on the low curb of the enclosure, but Jack and Alice were still eager to explore. Soon their calls summoned the twins to the dining-room, and the whole quartette, with faces close to the walls, began studying the fascinating little cupids that surrounded the room at the top of the dado, making sport of all the trades of the world. There they were plump, rosy and mischievous, clad in floating draperies, their wings a-flutter, absorbed in forging, carpentering, and all the duties of our work-a-day world. No one could ask for more charming companions for a home meal or a state dinner.

From the dining-room, Alice and her mother easily found their way to the neighboring kitchen. It seemed very small, but the huge cooking utensils, still in position, spoke well for the liberality of the master of the house. "I wonder what kind of things they had to eat," said Mrs. Carter. "That

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big kettle, over there looks just the thing for a New England boiled dinner, but I can not quite imagine boiled beef and vegetables in the same room with those cupids, can you?"

Jack laughed at the idea. Kitchens, as such, did not appeal to him especially, but his fancy was taken with the notion of planning an early Roman bill of fare. "Let's come out in the courtyard, and play at ordering dinner," he said, catching Alice by the arm. Mademoiselle entered gaily into the spirit of the game, and soon an imaginary meal was sketched out, made up of the favorite dishes of each child. An old inhabitant of Pompeii would have been as astonished at the menu, as at the modern children and their every-day clothes.

"Where is Father?" asked Kate suddenly.

"He has gone by himself to a house near-by where they are just beginning to dig. Then he is going to see if he can not get us back to the entrance without any more walking. It has been rather a pull over these rough lava pavements."

Presently, they heard the measured coming of many feet, walking in time, and went out to the entrance of the house, to find that Mr. Carter and the guide had succeeded in finding three of the litters, that are provided for tourists, whose enthusiasm outruns their strength. Mrs. Carter and Kate, Mademoiselle, Alice and Robert, the last named bitterly resenting that he was not allowed to walk, "like the rest of the men," were comfortably settled in these old-time vehicles. Even Robert confessed

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that it was nice to be carried, and the bearers swung them easily along the stony ways with their even, measured tread.

"Now, we must play that we are going out to dinner, instead of having people come to us," called Alice. "What house did you all like best? Where do you want to go?"

"I liked the baths best," said Kate sleepily, "there were real things to eat there."

"That's being greedy," answered Robert, "besides it is not playing our game."

So, calling back and forth in their play, they soon found themselves at the gate, and in their own carriages, on their way back to Naples.

"Do you believe now, Alice, that Vesuvius could cover anything with ashes?"

"Indeed, I do. It looked as if the mountain were in everybody's back yard; wherever we went, it was looking right down on us."

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CHAPTER V

NAPLES AGAIN

"If we are to go out to Sorrento to live, you must give us all the holiday time you can, here in Naples, for we certainly see things much better when you take us."

"Even work seems like holiday-making, in this climate. I have presented my letters to the people who can help me, and they are most kind. It is tremendously interesting to see how these men are taking up the questions of modern life. They are great engineers."

"Haven't they always kept that up, Father?" asked Jack, thinking of the water works in Pompeii.

"I am not sure, but I have a notion that there was a long in-between period, when water pipes and heating devices were all forgotten, and the secret of keeping comfortable, as the old Romans knew it, and as we know it, slipped out of mind. Perhaps they were too busy, having wars and keeping alive."

"But did they have to keep warm with pipes, when they had this lovely sunshine?"

"You wait until we have a wet day, Alice. All these stone and plaster buildings have a gift for holding the damp. Just get your things on, you

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and all the rest of the family, and we will go to the Museum. I turned in there, the other day, and saw a good many things that will interest you, after your visit to Pompeii."

"Can we take the open car, along the nice curly road?" begged Kate. "It goes so fast, and the people are so funny."

"I like your reasons for preferring it to a cab," laughed her mother, "but you must learn to call it a tram in this country."

Kate had good reasons for her favorite tram ride, for the road winds, with many fascinating glimpses of the lower town, and the Bay, along the base of the hills that are crowned by the Fortress of Saint Elmo, and the Church of San Martino.

"I want to go up there, just to look 'way over," said Robert.

"To-day must mean the Museum, and the Aquarium," answered his father, "and if we do not keep to them, there is no telling how far we may wander."

The Museum in Naples is a city in itself, and Mr. Carter wisely decided that the children should not attempt too wide an exploration.

"There are simply miles of pictures and marbles in here," he said, "but I want you to see only a few rooms." He led them first to the galleries of paintings from Pompeii and Herculaneum, and then to the bronzes from the same wonderful treasure towns. "These are the things that were found in the earlier excavations, the dark bronzes are from

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Herculaneum, and the green ones from Pompeii."

A little crow of delight came from the adjoining room, where the twins were with Mademoiselle, and Robert came running back to his mother. "We have found our funny little man again," he said, "come and look at him."

Kate was standing in front of the Dancing Faun, laughing up into his face, as into that of an old friend. "Why are there two of him," she demanded, "one here, and one out in Pompeii?"

"This is the real one, the other is a copy. You know I told you that, in the beginning, there was no thought of preserving the towns themselves. People only wanted to get the beautiful things safe into some museum."

"But how do they get two of him?" persisted Kate, who could only see that, by some miracle, the fauns were twins, like Robert and herself.

Mademoiselle undertook to satisfy her troubled mind.

"You see," she said in her careful French, keeping to short and simple words that the children might follow her easily, "they take all sorts of measurements, and make a metal envelope that just fits your little man all over. They pour the bronze into this envelope, and when it is cool again, it is taken away, and there is another man, exactly the same as the one you like so much." Mademoiselle saw a shade of disappointment on the children's faces, and was quick enough to realize that her careful explanation had made dancing fauns too

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A Scene in Naples

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common in their eyes. "This, though, is the real one," she hastened to add. "Just think how many years he spent down there, in the ground, out of sight, still trying to dance and laugh. Would not you think he would be glad to get out into the sunshine again?"

"I had rather be a copy, out in the courtyard in Pompeii, than be shut up here, in a house with all these queer folks!" Robert looked with suspicion upon the bronze figures sitting and standing about the room. They were as fantastically unreal to him as the stiff painted people on the walls of the first gallery. "Did they really look as funny as that?" he asked his mother, thinking of the wide-eyed, staring men and women of long ago.

"Well, you know, dear, when you and Kate try to draw, you don't always make things look exactly like the things you see, do you? Those pictures were made when the whole world was young. People were learning to do things, just as you and Kate are learning to do things. You will see many pictures that seem stiff and funny, but perhaps you will learn to love them as I do, when you remember that they were painted on the spot, where the people they are trying to tell us about, were living. Now we are going upstairs where the small bronzes are. I want Alice to see all the household things, since she is so anxious to know how people cooked in Pompeii."

The Room of Small Bronzes holds an interest far beyond what its name would imply. Alice

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found almost enough cooking utensils to satisfy even her curiosity, and all the children gathered about the huge money chests, that their father assured them were the Pompeiian form of safe-deposits. In different cabinets they found collections of water faucets, door plates, locks and keys, in short, all the "fixtures" that go to complete a modern dwelling in these days of ours.

"One more flight of stairs, and you will have seen all I want you to, to-day," said Mr. Carter. "Perhaps these things won't interest you, but I want you, at least, to remember that you have seen them." He led them into the Library of the Papyri, pointing out the curious rolls of manuscript, that they might appreciate what the books of that long past period looked like. "All these came from a villa near Herculaneum, and at first their value was not appreciated. In later years, however, some one invented a machine that separated the different layers of the scrolls that were all stuck together with the heat. Some day, Jack, when you begin to study Cicero, just remember that you have seen copies of some books that were written by a friend of his."

"Let us play one more of our games, before we leave the Museum," said Mrs. Carter. "Suppose you take the twins, Mademoiselle, and Mr. Carter and I each take one of the older children. Then we will wander just where we please through the galleries. The children can lead, and we grown folks will follow, to see that no one gets lost. In three-quarters of an hour, we will meet at the main en-

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trance, and tell one another what we have seen."

"Very well," and Mr. Carter tucked Alice's arm within his, starting her down the stairs, toward the rooms of more general interest. The twins and Mademoiselle were soon out of sight. Jack and his mother drifted by common consent into the picture galleries, drawn by the soft colors, and the many stories that unfolded themselves on the walls. Alice and her father strayed through the almost endless corridors of sculpture, coming by chance upon the two famous "Farnese" marbles, which Alice promptly pronounced "rather horrid." When the time came for the family reunion at the entrance, Mademoiselle and her charges failed to appear.

"I believe I know where they are," cried Alice, and, with unerring instinct, she led them back to the room of the Pompeiian bronzes where, sure enough, both Kate and Robert were standing in front of their beloved "little man," saying their good-bys. Even the return along the curly road failed to detach their minds from their merry favorite, and only luncheon and the early afternoon nap, which was becoming an established habit in their busy days of sightseeing, were able to clear their minds for new impressions.

"You are looking as fresh as possible," said Mr. Carter, as he joined them for their afternoon walk. "Just as if you had never dreamed of a big museum."

"Where are we going now, please?" asked Jack.

"Down to the Park by the Bay. I believe we can

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walk there, going down is so much easier than climbing up. There are some streets on our way that are hardly more than flights of steps."

"The Aquarium in the Park?" This from Robert, who had a distinct remembrance of his father's exact outline of their duties for the day.

"Quite right. There it is, that low white building over there, to our left. You see fishes don't need two-storied establishments."

"How did it happen to be there?" asked Alice, the curious.

"The guide-book says it was founded by the German naturalist, who is still at its head, a Doctor Dohrn. It was not got together just to amuse traveling folk like us, but for real study. All the great nations contribute a little to its up-keep, just for the privilege of studying here."

"Oh, dear! Are fishes something to study, too?" wailed Kate, who found the world far too full of things that demanded study.

"We will take them as playthings, to-day," replied her mother, as they entered the low room, with its fascinating rows of what Jack called "green windows." From one window to another, the children fluttered with little cries of excitement. There was no burden of study about this entrancing occupation. Stately flat fishes, with the haughty indifference that only a flat fish can assume, sailed close to the glass, and wicked cuttle-fish lurked in dark corners. Kate, who had thought she did not wish to study fish, was full of eager questions. "Is there

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anything in here?" she asked, stopping in front of a tank filled apparently with swaying sea-weeds and thread-like grasses. "Watch," was Mademoiselle's only reply, and as she spoke a delicate bit of gossamer, like a fairy parasol, detached itself from its moorings, waved tiny fringes of its own, and sailed across the tank to another anchorage. "These, too, are alive, but it is not so easy to realize it," she said, leading the way to the coral with its lovely structure, and pale coloring.

"What is happening, over there?" cried Alice, as a crowd gathered about a window on the farther side of the room. Joining the crowd was the simplest way of finding out, and the Carters pressed forward with the rest. The great octopus was about to be fed. A custodian was dangling a live crab, most invitingly from the end of a string, in the dark water of the tank. Great evil eyes were watching from either side. There was a tremendous commotion as a shapeless something flung itself from a ledge, and the crab was gone. The octopus from the other side arrived just too late, and the two encountered. At once, an inky fluid filled the tank, and the two creatures retired to their ledges in the murk of their own making.

"Ugh!" said Mr. Carter. "No wonder they nick-name them 'devil-fish.'"

"Father," whispered Alice, "he didn't even swallow it, but just fell all over it, like a horrid bag."

"I am afraid that is his way, my dear. It was

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not pretty to see, suppose we try to forget it."

Forgetting came easily to Kate and Robert, and their childish voices were heard across the hall, raised in glee. They had discovered the most engaging collection in the entire Aquarium, the huge enclosure given over to crabs, lobsters, and sea-anemones. Here, as if Nature had never taken the trouble to sort anything in her life, was a joyous hurly-burly of waving tentacles and frantic claws. Exquisite pale blues and pinks, purples, and even greens of a sort, marked the position of the anemones that were, as Jack said, "happy and contented": mere blobs of dingy brown marked the same little creatures in the sulks. Adventurous members of that same family had attached themselves to the hard shells of crabs and lobsters, instead of being content with the rocks for which they were designed. Two had fastened themselves in this fashion to the same crab, and shared his journeys, sticking out at ridiculous angles, like the overloaded panniers of a Neapolitan donkey. This same crab, in his scuttling path across the sands, had stumbled blindly upon a huge lobster, at rest. There was nothing in his philosophy to help him in such a crisis, and he could only draw away, and come crashing back, again and again. The lobster never stirred, but the traveling anemones drew in all their tentacles, after a shock or two, and a hermit crab, near-by, waved every claw he had, in his excitement.

Kate and Robert had to be dragged away, at the

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Photo by S. E. Moses

Street Scene—Naples

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closing hour. Even the sight of shaggy, white goats trotting up the steep streets, tumbling in at doorways, and actually climbing up stairs to be milked at the homes of their customers, could not excite them any more. Their measure of emotion was full. Their sleep, that night, was visited by tiny dancing men that drove clumsy crabs round and round on a stretch of sandy beach, with such twinkling of feet, and snapping of fingers, that the children laughed aloud in their dreams.

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CHAPTER VI

SORRENTO

The Hotel Beau Site is perched at a reckless angle, on a special shelf of its own, on Sorrento's rocky shore. Its pink, stuccoed walls peep out from between friendly trees. Its tiled court and garden, and its many balconies, make it a favorite with all who are fortunate enough to discover its charms. Its lovers are jealous of the stranger, so Mr. Carter counted himself fortunate when a friend gave him a letter to the proprietor. After two weeks of busy sight-seeing in Naples, he transplanted his family to Sorrento, settling them in the sunny second floor of the Beau Site, while he went back and forth to Naples as his business engagements demanded.

Mrs. Carter and Mademoiselle started at once upon that course of mending and "redding up," so dear to the woman traveler when she has a period of playing at being settled, while the children ranged at will over the safe confines of garden and house.

"They really should have some kind of schooling," Mrs. Carter had said to her husband, on the night of their arrival, "but it is difficult to arrange, for the short time we are to be here. Mademoiselle

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teaches them for an hour every morning, and for another in the afternoon, but that is not helping them to get Italian. More than that we do not want them to get out of the habit of school. I hardly know what to do."

As it happened, Alice, with her happy gift of making acquaintances, solved the question. "There is such a sweet-faced lady, who sits and knits, on the lower balcony," she told her mother. "Her sister is pale and lame, and can not leave her chair. They called me the other day from the garden, and we had such a nice talk. Won't you come and see them?"

Mrs. Carter, who had been walking in the little three-cornered garden, overhanging the cliff, found herself dragged to the lowest of the balconies, where Alice's new friends were sitting. "This is my mother," was Alice's simple statement. She believed in leaving formalities to her elders.

The older of the two ladies stretched a big, soft hand down over the balcony wall. "Our name is Kenyon," she said, "and we have got so much pleasure in watching your children in the garden, that we feel almost as apologetic as if we had been stealing part of them. Won't you come up on our terrace, and sit with us a while? those steps there make it easy."

Mrs. Carter accepted willingly, giving her name, which Alice had considered unnecessary, and shaking hands with both the sisters. "You have a charming corner here; I had no idea that the trees

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hid such an outdoor sitting-room. From the garden it looks like a narrow balcony."

"We are thankful to have it," replied the younger sister, "since I have made us prisoners here by my stupid accident."

"You must not put it like that, Lulu," interrupted Miss Kenyon. "Prisoners is an ugly word for being tied to such pleasant quarters. We were on our way to our home in Rome, after a journey in Sicily, when my sister fell, and broke her knee. Naturally, we are waiting for it to get well. We are Irish, both of us retired school-teachers, and we have been making our home in Rome for the last ten years. Don't you like to get all the preliminaries of an acquaintance well out of the way?"

Mrs. Carter laughed. "It certainly seems to save time," she answered. "We are Americans, and Mr. Carter has settled us here for the few weeks that his business will keep him near Naples. I hope the children have not annoyed you by their noise in the garden. They are healthy youngsters, and have no idea of what quiet means."

"Truly, we have enjoyed watching them, and, if you would not mind, we should love to have them up on our terrace once in a while. We are rather lonely here some days, when the knee hurts more than usual, and Rome seems very far away."

"Perhaps, too," said Miss Lulu, her pale face brightening, "we could help them get a little Italian. I should love to try."

From this pleasant beginning grew a delightful

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friendship, that filled Miss Lulu's days with the gay laughter and fancies of children, and helped her to forget the pain and confinement of her illness. Sometimes she would take one child at a time, repeating the Italian names of familiar objects until everything in sight had been named; at other times all four children would gather round her chair, listening breathlessly to tales of Roman heroes, or Irish fairies, told half in Italian, half in English. There was no more talk of tutors or teachers for the time being. Even Kate and Robert were only too glad to have an afternoon with "Alice's Ladies," as they called them, for the stories and teaching were interspersed with the goodies that Miss Kenyon considered an absolutely necessary part of every child's life.

Alice's education went even a step farther, for Miss Kenyon began to teach her to knit edging, an accomplishment one hardly expects to find on the list of a flyaway American ten-year-old. She took to it, however, with enthusiasm, and many a sunny afternoon found her settled in a corner of her friend's terrace, busily counting stitches in the intervals of an Italian lesson.

"There is a town, down in Sicily," Miss Kenyon told her one day, "where children, younger than you, sit in a big sunny room, and make lace, and do embroidery. It is a school, started by an Englishwoman, to help the children take care of themselves, and keep them from running wild in the streets. They are not allowed to work too long at a time,

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or get too tired, and the things they are taught are the things their mothers and grandmothers have been doing all their lives, so it seems to come easily to them. All over Italy, there are women interested in this kind of work, trying to help the people to keep alive all the old arts. Handicrafts, some folks call them; we say cottage industries in Ireland, where the peasants are the workers.

"Some years ago, these ladies got together and had an exhibition of work in Rome. People sent in every bit of old loveliness that they could find, laces and embroideries that had been in their families for generations. Among other things, there was a fine old rug, such as the countrywomen used to make. It was hung where everybody could see it, for such rugs are rare, and this one was priceless. To the delight of all concerned, the Queen Mother, Margherita, noticed it, wanted one like it and left an order that meant fame for the association, and money in its treasury.

"It seemed simple to get another rug made, when the pattern was there to copy, but when the search began for someone to do the weaving, things took a serious turn. No one knew how! They ransacked Italy. People remembered such rugs, but there was no one who could set one up on the loom, or tell how the threads should be woven. At least, away up in the Apennines — those are the mountains that run the whole length of Italy — they found an old peasant woman, who not only remembered the rugs, but had her old loom ready. They promptly

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brought her down within reach of folks, and set her to work on the Queen's rug. Not only that, but they brought together a class of young girls to take lessons from her. So that art was saved."

Alice had been listening with all her ears, while her fingers growing more accustomed to her work, were busily making three rows of holes in her edging. "What made you and Miss Lulu go to live in Rome?" she asked.

"We had been traveling for nearly two years. It was our way of celebrating our freedom, for we had only recently given up our teaching. We had wintered in Rome, and made good friends there, so when one of them said, 'Why don't you take a little apartment here and settle down,' it appeared to us a most reasonable thing to do. Our friends in England thought we were mad, quite, but we reasoned with them, and finally brought our odd bits of furniture away with us, and settled in our present home."

"That is sister's story," interrupted Miss Lulu, "it really all happened because I insisted upon dropping a penny into the Fountain of Trevi. You know you must always be sure to do that, if you want to come back to Rome."

"What fun!" cried Jack, who was curled up over a book, within earshot. "Where is the fountain, and why do people say that about the penny?"

"I do not know, exactly. It is a very old superstition. Perhaps it was a sort of gift to the Water God. You never can tell how far back a thing

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does go in Rome. Anyway, if you want to be sure of returning, or of meeting some friend that you have not seen for a long time, you must go down to the Fountain of Trevi, in the lower part of the town, and solemnly drop a penny into the water."

"We will go and put a penny there, when we reach Rome, so that you and Miss Lulu will be sure and meet us," said Alice, with an affectionate little smile, as she nodded her head over her knitting.

"I am afraid the Water God has not much influence over broken bones," laughed Miss Lulu, "we shall have to wait for the doctor, and for time, to make it well.

"You children must remember to put your pennies in so that you may surely come back to Rome, and see us there some time. It is a wonderful place to visit, again and again."

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CHAPTER VII

CAPRI

The Capri steamer lay off the Sorrento shore, and boats of passengers were gathering from all sides. Miss Kenyon stood out on her balcony, waving her handkerchief to the Carters who were starting for their excursion to the Island. "It is absurd," she said to her sister, "to think how much we miss those children, when they are away for an entire day."

"They are certainly very unusual," answered Miss Lulu. "And fairly good," she added, the teacher in her coming to the front for the moment. "I am so glad there is something to interest you while I am keeping you here. What does the doctor say about our going home?"

"He says bluntly that you must not think of it as yet. Why do you worry, it won't help your knee."

"I do so want to get home. It is the expense, as much as anything; and the thought of our empty rooms, and of such a good servant as Philomena being wasted, I suppose."

"Never mind, it is lovely and warm here, and for all we know, Rome may be having a chilly spell," remarked Miss Kenyon comfortably. "Besides, I

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have an idea," and taking up her knitting, she settled herself in the corner of the balcony for a quiet, morning talk.

In the meantime, the Capri boat was well on her way to the Island. The sea certainly was not smooth, and the children were content to stay close within the shelter of one of the big paddle-wheels, watching the beautiful shore as it seemed to slip away from the stern of their steamer.

"Do we go into the Grotto first, or shall we wait until the crowd is gone, and get a boat of our own?" asked Mrs. Carter.

"Your 'Mr. Painter' told me to leave that to him. He has the horror of the true Capri man, of seeing the Grotto with a crowd."

"Grottos can not be any nicer than 'Mr. Painter,'" said Kate, spying her friend among the loiterers on the pier, as the steamer drew near its landing. "Are we not going to do just what he says?"

Indeed, she had unconsciously outlined their entire day. Swept away from the landing and its crowd, they found themselves climbing the hill in carriages of their host's providing. "You are not to have a thought, or a plan," he said, "this is my day."

Up the twisting road they went, climbing to the town of Capri, that sits so securely in the "saddle" stretching between the two heights of the Island. Then through the Piazza, with its enclosing walls and buildings, and its vaulted exit to the town, and

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so back along a road that lay above the one they had taken from the shore.

"You see," said the host, opening his garden-gate, "it takes only a white-washed wall and a wooden gate to shut out the world, and shut in paradise."

His last word was well chosen. The gate opened upon a tiled path that led to the fore-court of the house. In the center of the court, a tiny fountain dripped and splashed as only an Italian fountain can, and on every side were orange trees and green growing things. The garden, itself, fell away, in a series of wide terraces, down the side of the Island, to a gate, tiny in the distance, that gave upon the shining, white road by which they had come up from the harbor.

"We always drive up, but it is quite easy to walk down. We shall not have lunch for about half an hour, and you can run loose in the meantime," he said to the children. "Don't be alarmed, Mrs. Carter, they can do no harm. If they pick the flowers, they will grow again; and all the marbles have, as you see, suffered a few knocks in their time already."

Mademoiselle prudently decided to keep her charges in view, and followed them slowly as they rushed breathlessly down the length of the terrace paths.

"Constant traveling means rather close quarters for them much of the time," said Mr. Carter, "so you must not be surprised if they act like wild In-

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dians, when you give them the run of your place like that."

"Believe me, it is good to see such a stampede. An old bachelor, like myself, does not often gather in such a charming brood."

Luncheon was served out under the pergola, the table placed, as Mrs. Carter said, so that they had the whole Bay of Naples as dessert.

"Now you can see," turning to Kate, "how easily I could watch Vesuvius, when it misbehaved, and frightened us all so badly."

"But it couldn't reach you here," said Alice.

"Not to do any real damage. Indeed, the layers of ashes that were spread over the garden, did it good. Ashes, and even lava, you know, enrich the ground wonderfully. That is why the peasants built their cottages and vineyards on the side of the mountain in the beginning, and why they continue to build them there in the very path of danger. It is the same all round Etna. Only Stromboli is too active to let people build near it, even if its sides were ever cool enough for planting."

Jack pricked up his ears. The new names made his face one mute question, and his host hastened to answer. "Etna is over in Sicily and Stromboli is an island between here and Sicily. Surely," turning to Mr. Carter, "you will cross over to Sicily, now that you are so near?"

"I fear that must wait until another journey. For the present our faces are turned northwards. There is much business in this holiday making of

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mine, and I doubt if I should find 'material' in Sicily."

"May I ask what the business is? There is so much 'material' of all sorts, in Sicily, that I am jealous for the Island, because you think she will not serve your purpose."

"I am commissioned by my State, Texas, to study the designing and construction of foreign towns. You would be surprised if you could see into how many curious by-paths such a study can lead."

"That I can quite believe, and in your turn you must believe me that Sicily holds much in store for you, even in the lines of your work. Both Palermo and Naples are better examples of town happening than town designing. Yet, in both cases, the men who started to remake the towns, had distinct enough ideas. You see the Spanish owners, of the 'Two Sicilies' were rare old tyrants, and when they wanted to 'improve' a place, they did not stop to say 'by your leave.' So you get the old Spanish streets, like Toledo, in Naples, and Maqueda, in Palermo, cut straight through masses and tangles of older streets, the corners and edges fitting themselves in as best they can. You must see Sicily sometime; Naples, with all her beauty, is after all the second of 'The Two Sicilies.'"

"There is some history for you, Jack. If this boy and I do the reading of history that we have planned, we shall have no time for light literature for years to come."

"My father and I used to read history together,

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and then suddenly, we found ourselves living history, when Italy began to make herself the country she is now. We were living in Florence when Victor Emanuel and his troops made their entrance into that city, and we were not far behind him in entering Rome, for my father was an enthusiastic follower of the struggle for a United Italy. Later when my mother's health broke down, we came here to Capri, and here I have lived all the rest of my life, except for an occasional run back to America. These people are really my people, their joys and sorrows my own."

Luncheon was over, the gentlemen were sitting smoking in the shade of the pergola, while Mrs. Carter and the children were wandering about the garden paths, discovering old friends among the flowers, and marveling at their growth. Robert, standing on an old marble bench, was looking out over the Bay. "What do you see?" asked Alice.

"Oh, everything, boats and the sea, and away across to Sorrento, and Vesuvius, with its feather blowing the other way round. Hullo! Isn't that our steamer coming back to her landing?"

"If that is so, Little Look-out Man, we must start, if we are to have our visit to the Grotto, and get you all back in time to catch the steamer before she starts back to Sorrento."

"Can't we walk down, the way you usually do?" asked Kate.

"Why, of course, if your mother doesn't think you will get too tired. With the garden, and some

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paths I will show you down below, it is not so very far to the landing."

The little gate in the lower wall let them out upon the roadway, well along in their journey to the sea. A path between high walls, that gave them some shelter from the hot sun of noonday, took them down over the hillside in a series of steps, like the dancing and skipping of a merry child. Soon, they were at the landing itself, where eager boatmen signaled and bargained, pushing their boats close in shore with quick, almost birdlike strokes, that made them fly over the water. "Mr. Painter" spoke to one of the older men, who shook his head gravely, smiling the while.

"He says the tide is rather high, and the sea not very smooth, but the wind is right. So if you are all good sailors, and we take boats enough, all will be well."

"What does he mean by that," asked Mrs. Carter, "does it make the sea smoother to have more boats?"

"Not exactly, but with the high tide and the rough sea, the entrance is not so easily made, and we must be only two to a boat, besides the boatman. Let me see, we are four grown people and four children; that will do very nicely. You are not nervous about going, are you, Mrs. Carter?"

"Certainly not, if you say it is all right. The children can be very good and quiet, when it is necessary."

Soon they were on their way, Jack with his

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mother, Alice with Mr. Carter, Robert with Mademoiselle, and Kate, self-elected, with their host. The boats kept close together, and made a merry little procession as they dipped and rose over the waves, along the base of the brown cliffs.

"How different it looks from a tiny boat, like this," said Mrs. Carter, tilting her head back to get the full height of the cliff. "The people over there on the steamer can not begin to feel as intimate with the Island as we do, can they Jack?"

The steamer was turning back to its moorings, by the Marina Grande, where it would wait patiently while its passengers explored Capri, trying to crowd into a few hours impressions that could easily fill as many months.

Kate stretched her hand out to Jack, as their boats drew close together. "'Mr. Painter' says that there are more funny crabs and fishes here in the caves than in the whole Aquarium," she called joyously. "Don't you wish we had time enough to see them all?"

"Come back some summer," said their host, gently drawing Kate toward him, for little arms can not safely be stretched out from skiffs that are small enough to enter the Grotto. "Very few people realize how lovely the Island is in summer. We get sea breezes all the season, and the walks and the boating are delightful. No one really knows Capri until he has passed a summer here."

"I wonder what your sister has discovered?" for a cry of surprise and delight came floating back

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from Alice, who was in the forward boat. "Ah, here is the discovery. I thought it was about time we saw some of these fellows; they are usually abundant along this shore."

"Oh, oh," cried Kate, "they are exactly like fairy boats, only all turned upside down."

A flotilla of jelly-fish, brilliant with all the colors of the rainbow, was floating past them. A boatman lifted one out of the water, most gently on the blade of his oar, that the children might see its long, waving tentacles, but the soft, shapeless little creature did not like being lifted into another element, and slipped easily back into the blue water, to go dancing after its mates.

Alice called to her mother to be "sure and see the big red one," but she lost all interest in mere jelly-fish when her boatman began to talk in a dialect, so different from any she had heard, that she could not believe that it was Italian. He laughed gaily at her frank dismay, and gave a peculiar call, that brought the other boats in a close group about him, their bows pointed toward what looked like the entrance of a cave. The boatmen chattered among themselves, and "Mr. Painter" translated their directions to the children, in a few short, crisp sentences.

"Lie flat on the bottom of the boats, not so much as a finger over the edge, for we may run close to the rocks. Now, keep your eyes wide open, and here we go!"

One by one, the boats, hanging warily outside the

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entrance, rose each to its wave, dipped at the right moment, rose again, and shot through the opening at the base of the cliff, gliding in that one moment, from the brilliant outside world of sunshine and glitter, into a sort of blue night, where everything shone with a light the children had never seen before.

"What makes it?" demanded Kate, in her most matter-of-fact manner. "My!" cried Robert, "do I look as funny a color as you do, Mademoiselle? You are all green-blue and silvery, like some of the things we saw in the Aquarium."

"We all look the same, I fancy. Watch that man over there."

One of the boatmen, leaving his skiff fast held between two of his comrades, flung off his outer garments, and slipped into the water with the ease of a diving bird. The children cried aloud, as they watched his slim white body go down, down into the clear, blue water. It was as if there were no bottom to the deep bowl into which they were looking.

"He looks like a silver fish, in a blue globe," said Alice. "Doesn't he have to come up to breathe?"

"Those fellows can stay down a wonderfully long time, but look, here he comes now," for with a turn and a splash, like the fish Alice had called him, he rose to the surface, shaking the water from his hair, and laughing gaily, as he drew himself into his boat. There his body shone with the same wonderful blue light.

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"What is it?" demanded Kate again.

"People have explained it in several ways," answered her friend, "but, do you know, I like to think that it is just part of the fairy story that goes to make up Naples and Vesuvius, and all the wonders of the sea and sky about us. Let us play that, after making all these lovely things, the fairies said: 'We will take a little piece of every beautiful thing we have made here, and we will crush the pieces, and roll them all together into one exquisite crystal ball, and hide it away in the rocks. If men find it, and want to understand it, they must first learn to love all the beautiful outside world, and then they must trust all that the fairy stories tell them of hidden jewels, vaulted caves, and enchanted princesses.'"

One of the rowers began to sing softly, as the boats circled about the center of the Grotto, and the others took up the chant. Echoes came from all sides, and the boats seemed to move in time to the music. Gradually they took up their positions, facing the exit of the cave, as they had faced the entrance, in regular order. The children needed no further warning; down into the bottoms of the boats they went, lying close, as each skillful rower shot out into the world of sunshine and bright skies.

"Oh," cried Jack, with a long breath, "it was really, truly fairy-land. But, I say," with a quick change of expression, "there goes our steamer!"

The Sorrento boat was slowly drawing away from the landing-stage, and heading across the Bay.

"Really, we must catch it," said Mrs. Carter, "a

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whole family of little folks can not camp out over night, as grown-ups can."

"Mr. Painter" gave a quick word of command to the rowers, while he stood erect in the stern of his own boat, waving his hat above his head. His tall, spare figure, and white hair were well known all over the Island, and a cheer went up from the steamer as he balanced himself so easily in the racing skiff. An answering signal came from the steamer, and she slowed down to wait for the belated passengers. With much laughing, and clinging to their elders, the children were finally safe aboard, and the other passengers looked on with friendly amusement, as the merry group gathered at the stern rail, to wave good-by to their host, who still stood erect in his tiny craft, as it danced on the waves of the steamer's wake.

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CHAPTER VIII

AMALFI

The idea that had come to Miss Kenyon, on the morning the Carters went to Capri, led to many an earnest talk between herself and Miss Lulu. Whether it could be worked out, was a question of much moment. There were so many nice things about it, if only it could be made a real fact, not just a dream. At last, after much hesitation, Miss Kenyon joined Mrs. Carter in the garden, one morning, when she was waiting for the family to gather for its long-planned drive to Amalfi, and put that idea into plain words.

"Do you think that you would like to take our apartment in Rome, for the time you are going to spend there?" The good lady spoke bluntly, for it meant so much to her and her sister. A safely rented apartment would surely help that tiresome knee on its way to recovery.

Mrs. Carter understood the bluntness, and answered with ready kindness and tact: — "Of course you would not suggest it, if there were not plenty of room for us all, so we need not go into that. But you must tell me all about the rent, the servants and their wages, and so on, for I do not like to go to Mr. Carter with any proposition, until I have my facts straight."

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Miss Kenyon's pleasant, round face lit up with appreciation at this direct descent to business. "I must be getting to be half Italian myself," she laughed, "if I am going to be shy of talking business. You can never get an Italian doctor to send you a bill, he thinks it is undignified: and I nearly broke the heart of the best Italian teacher I ever had by paying him for my lesson, in person."

"Why, what did he expect you to do?"

"Send it to him by messenger, and save his pride. He was a gentleman, you see."

"Ah, well! We are of another race, and can talk facts, without hurting each other, I hope."

Then and there, they went into every detail. The apartment was in the new "extra-sanitary" part of Rome, between the Quirinal and the Porta Pia; not so picturesque, perhaps, but more healthful than the older quarters of the town. Everything was in order, for they themselves had expected to return soon, before Lulu's accident, and their one servant would be there, ready to make every one comfortable. She was a good soul, no longer young, but devoted and capable. So the catalogue of the good points in the idea ran on, until Mrs. Carter began to feel that chance had indeed opened to her a real home in a strange land.

"I will talk it over with Mr. Carter, and let you know what we can do, just as soon as I can," she said, as the carriages for their drive turned in at the courtyard. It was still early morning on one of those delicious Italian days when the sky is crystal

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View of Amalfi

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clear, and the entire surface of the sea is crinkled into one continuous smile, as if it were having a delightful joke with itself. The road from Sorrento to Amalfi is a steep climb for the first hour, but the gallant little horses of this holiday peninsula are too important to their masters not to be fairly well cared for, and they take the climb with ease, tossing their heads, with their decorations of saucily erect feathers.

"I suppose it makes a horse feel proud of himself to have a pheasant's tail feather stuck up between his ears, like that," said Robert, looking with disfavor at some undecorated, bedraggled horses that were passing on their way down to Sorrento.

As their own carriages reached the crest, everyone turned instinctively to look back at the rock-perched town, that was already beginning to seem so like home, and at the wonderful Bay, silver-blue in the strong morning sunshine. Vesuvius was sending forth an unusual pillar of smoke, that branched out at the top, like a huge umbrella.

"We have not seen it like that before," said Alice, "is it going to do things?"

"I was asking that in Naples only yesterday, for I should like to make the ascent before we leave the neighborhood," answered her father. "They say there is no danger of an eruption, but the railroad up the mountain is closed to the public, at present, by order of the Government."

"I should not in the least mind their forbidding me to go up there. Distance is a good thing, when

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one has such a wicked neighbor," and Mrs. Carter cheerfully turned her face toward the horses, content with the quiet beauty of the orange and lemon groves, through which they were making their way to the Bay of Salerno, and to Amalfi.

"We were talking of engineering, the other day, in Naples, Jack. Look at this road. See how wonderfully it is buttressed and safeguarded. I wish some one would send me over here to study road making, so that I could have the fun of going home and telling them all how much we have to learn."

With many a twist and turn, the road reached the shore of the Salerno Bay, then, turning to the south, it followed the lovely outline of the cliffs, clinging to their very edge, to avoid some spur of the hills that reached down to the blue water, or bending far inland to round the head of some inlet.

"This was surely a great coast for pirates and smuggling, in the bad old days. Look what a shelter they could have found there," pointing to the deep cleft in the rocks, where the little town of Positano stands, like the two-faced god of the Romans, on both sides of the bank at once.

"Why, it is a lovely little place, I can not have it given over to pirates," and Mrs. Carter ruffled the pages of her guide-book for some defense against such a reputation being given to the town of her sudden fancy. "Here it is mentioned as an important place during the Anjou Dynasty. After all, it might still have been a pirate stronghold," she added a bit ruefully.

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"Is not Anjou a French name, Mother?" Jack was bewildered by the constant mixture of nationalities.

"Yes, this part of the country has had many masters, from the time when Greece sent her colonies over here, taking Capri first, and calling the whole southern end of Italy 'Greater Greece.' Don't you remember that 'Mr. Painter' said that Naples was only the second of the 'Two Sicilies'? And don't you remember 'King Robert of Sicily'? He was a Frenchman, a Norman, and his race held the country for several generations. Later came the Spanish Bourbons, and a very terrible set they were. Perhaps you children will be able to straighten all this history out some day. I tried once, with a really excellent book, called 'The Rulers of The South.' I could not imagine why I was so exhausted by it, but when I counted over a few dates, I found I had been wading through more than two thousand years. That, you see, was quite a journey."

They passed many another interesting village, but none so charmingly two-faced as Positano, and at about noon time, Amalfi itself came into view, spread like an exquisite yellow and white mantle over the cliffs above the purple sea.

"Is that a place for pirates, or for kings?" asked Alice, jumbling together, after her fashion, the whole conversation of the last few minutes.

"Isn't it a place for lunch?" piped up Robert, whose interest in the past was a feeble thing when he was hungry.

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"I am afraid Robert has the 'sympathy of the house,' Alice, and your question will have to wait until we are fed. Luncheon is at the top of those stairs. How many think they can climb them?"

Mrs. Carter looked hopeless for a moment, then, spying the bearers and their chairs, settled contentedly back in the carriage seat. "I am learning to be waited on, in this country of ease and restfulness," she said. The twins elected to climb, and scrambled away from Mademoiselle, who tried vainly to keep up with them as in duty bound. The others were willing to be carried, and were swung easily to the high terrace, where even their healthy appetites could not prevent their lingering to enjoy the view.

Luncheon at the Cappucini-Convent Hotel is a fascinating experience, and the after-luncheon rest, on this same terrace, a thing to remember in happy dreams. Mrs. Carter's statement, quoted from the guide-book, that the town was given over chiefly to the manufacture of paper, soap and macaroni was greeted with shouts of derision, and Mr. Carter declared he preferred pirates to such commonplace, modern things. Mrs. Carter laughingly protested that, as the information she gave them was not a success, she could answer no more questions, so Alice had to look up the answer to her question, herself, and found, to her amazement that Amalfi had once been as important a town as Genoa, or Pisa.

"What happened to it?" asked Jack, looking

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down from the terrace over the crowded roofs of the village, that seemed hardly more than a fishing hamlet.

Alice read on hastily, turning her information into her own words. "It wouldn't mind either the Princes of Salerno, or the Kings of Naples, and they reduced it in 1131. I suppose that means they made it smaller. Then, in the twelfth century, the sea reduced it some more, for nearly half of it fell into the water. It never got over that, but it is ever so pretty, even if it isn't as important as Genoa."

There was just time enough for a stroll into the town, before their carriages would be ready for the return drive, and Mr. and Mrs. Carter started down the long stairway, with the two older children, leaving the twins in the safe shelter of the Cappucini Cloister with Mademoiselle. Amalfi skirts the shore for a little while, and then turns, in quick and furtive fashion, and tries to crowd herself out of sight, in the ravine between her sheltering mountains. Perhaps she remembers she was once great and powerful, and regrets that she is now only a show place. She certainly has all the vices of a town that lives on the thoughtless, wandering rich. Beggars of dauntless courage haunt her streets, and the Carters soon found that their little stroll was destined to become a procession. Picturesque boatmen begged to be allowed to take the entire group, at exorbitant rates, to the neighboring grottos, or even to distant Capri. A devoted cabman, with a

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somewhat sorry horse, declared he lived only to drive them to Ravello, perched high upon the hills. So sure was he of his mission that he dogged their footsteps the length of the town, and when they took refuge in the Cathedral, waited patiently until they came out again. The greater part of the attendant procession simply asked, offering no services in return.

Jack looked at them all in amazement. This was his first experience of the sort. His thoughts flew back to friendly, independent Stephano, up there in Genoa. To be sure, he, too, was fond of coppers, but he did not try to choke them out of people! Jack was beginning to note the extraordinary difference between the Italian of the South, and his brother of the North. It was to take years of patient study before he could appreciate the causes of the difference, and sympathize with the Southerner.

"Kate's Capri friend is right," said Mr. Carter, "I should not care to live in Amalfi, unless I could get on without ever leaving the Cappucini grounds."

The procession fell away, when it saw that its attempts were useless, and the Terrace was regained without further trouble. The carriages were waiting patiently, and in a short time the return journey was begun. To the surprise of everyone, it was quite as interesting, and even more beautiful than the drive over had been, for the long afternoon shadows crept along the cliffs, softening the light on sea and land, until all the world was wrapt in

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a gentle haze. It seemed almost evening, although it was only five o'clock, when they turned into the courtyard of the Beau Site, to find kindly Miss Kenyon beckoning from their balcony. She was inviting them to tea, with the "cambric" variety, well fortified with goodies, for the children.

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CHAPTER IX

CASTELLAMARE

Mrs. Carter had sent the four children for a walk with Mademoiselle, and was sitting on the Kenyons' terrace, at the Beau Site. "You were speaking, the other day," she said, "of the best Italian teacher you ever had. Do you know where we could find someone who could travel with us, and teach the children not only Italian, but other things in Italian? I may be wrong, but I have always thought that a child got a much better idea of a language, if it were learned almost unconsciously in the course of studying something else. See how the children have simply gathered in Italian from you and Miss Lulu. They have not been conscious, for a moment, that they have been taught it."

"You speak as if the time for going was drawing near. I hope it isn't," said Miss Lulu.

"Not so very near, but I am terribly forehanded. The weeks here have been delightful. I only wish I could tell you how much this friendly corner has meant to us all."

Miss Kenyon's face lit up with her charming smile, a smile that brought into play all sorts of quaint dimples, dimples close up under her pleasant gray eyes, and dimples that lurked in odd cor-

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ners of her lovable round face. "The man you heard me speak of is now across in Sicily, called home by the death of his father, and the responsibilities that fall naturally upon the oldest son in this country. He is none too happy there, and might be glad to take what would be a holiday for him. I will write him, if you wish. There would not be room for him in our apartment, but I fancy he would rather like 'lodging out' as we say in England. He is young still, a gentleman, and a good deal of a traveler. Indeed, I think he has been to your side of the world. We knew him in Rome, and studied with him, as private pupils, when we were strangers to everything and everybody, and his courtesy and kindly interest helped us as much as the Italian he taught us. At that time he was instructor in history in an Italian school. I think he could do what you want, if only he can leave his mother and his younger brother, who are very dependent upon him."

"Do you mean that his responsibilities tie him in Sicily?"

"Yes. Being the head of the family is a very serious thing in this country. There are countless little conventions and niceties of which we have no idea in our more casual existence. I will write Signor Marello to-night, if you wish."

"I should be very much obliged. Mr. Carter can surely make some arrangements at a neighboring hotel while we are in Rome, for I have set my heart on being in your apartment there. We can

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consider that as settled, may we not? With a real home, for a time, and a real tutor, the children will forget they are traveling. Here they are now, full of some excitement."

They stormed the terrace as if it had been a fort, and then stopped short, remembering their manners. "We can not say please can we come up, for you see we are all here," said Jack. "Please excuse us. We have had such a lovely walk, and we want to tell you all about it." Jack had taken up the pretty habit of retailing all his experiences to Miss Lulu, bringing to her couch his bits of flowers, and shells and seaweed, all the treasures that a rocky shore gives up so gladly to an inquisitive boy.

This afternoon, his trophy was of the land, for he brought a spray of stone pine from the valley below the Telegrapho. "We went up there to see if we could look across to Capri, and find 'Mr. Painter's' house," he said.

"We could see Capri beautifully," interrupted Kate, "but all the little houses looked alike."

"We had our best time coming home," said Alice. "As we came down toward the bridge across the river, we met an old peasant woman, who was bringing oranges into town to sell. Mademoiselle bought us all some, and the old woman said something that we could not understand at first. Jack puzzled it out at last, and what do you suppose it was? We could have the oranges cheaper if we would give her back the skins! We did it just for fun, to see what she would do with them, and she hung them,

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all curling, round the edges of her basket. We could not understand all she said when we asked her what that was for, but I think she said to sell again, to make candies and jam. Can that be right, Miss Lulu?"

"Quite right, my dear, and you are a clever little pupil to make it out, for the words are hard, and the accent harder. Did you talk any more with her?"

"Lots, for she was tired, and so were we. We all sat down on the stone wall together. She kept pointing down the ravine, and telling us stories of little people who live down there, and go fishing only on certain nights of the year. Then, on one special full moon, we could not make out which, they come up on the Piazza, and dance their own particular tarantella. But she said it all so seriously that we couldn't be sure whether she was telling fairy tales or not. What are 'monacelli,' Miss Kenyon?"

"You remembered the one word that is the key to the mystery, Alice. Monacelli are dwarfs. I have heard that the country people hereabout believed that the ravines are inhabited by dwarfs, but I never could get any of them to talk to me about them. You see your advantage in being children."

"I realize their advantage in having had you two kind ladies to teach them Italian," said their mother.

Miss Lulu laughed. "I fear it has been a kind of Italian peculiarly adapted to the ferreting out of

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fairy tales. Our talks have been as much of fairies and 'the little people' as of history. You must make allowances for our Irish blood." Even as she laughed, Miss Lulu winced, for the lame knee had slipped her mind for the moment and had been jarred.

"Tell me, please, how is it?" Alice spoke very gently, laying her hand lightly on the coverlid over her friend's feet. "Father was wondering, the other day, when he was talking with me, if it would be possible for you to get into a carriage, if we were very, very careful of you, and drive away with us all. He said you ought to make a pilgrimage to 'Quisisana' and then you would be all right again; but when I asked him where that was, and what it meant, he only laughed at me, and told me to dig the meaning out of my Italian."

"Father certainly believes in digging things out," laughed Jack. "Have you found out what it means?"

"Quisisana means 'Here one gets well,' and it is the name of a villa and a hotel over in Castellamare," said Miss Kenyon. "I only wish your father's kind thought could be put into deeds. I wonder if you could stand the drive, Lulu? We might at least ask the doctor. It is years since we have been along that stretch of road, for we came to Sorrento, this time, by way of the Capri boat."

During the days that followed this afternoon talk, there were many conferences between the two families, on the two subjects that interested them most,

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the possible coming of Signor Marello, and the planning of Miss Lulu's drive. The first matter was left to Miss Kenyon and Mrs. Carter, but into the project of the drive, Mr. Carter threw himself with characteristic energy. "Of course it can be done," he said. "So long as the doctor does not actually say no, there is a chance of persuading him to say yes."

As the days went on, and the doctor saw the constant brightening of Miss Lulu's face, under this merry stimulation, he wisely decided that the risk was one to be taken. Mr. Carter insisted that the two ladies were to be his guests for the two or three days of their absence, and the children were sent to study the cab rank, just outside the town, to choose the most comfortable of the low-swung, two-seated little carriages that make driving along that shore such a matter of intimate communion with hedgerow and flowers and birds. They were so in earnest in their quest, that the cab drivers, almost as much children as themselves, found great sport in driving out from the rank, in a sort of competitive examination, to show how smoothly their carriage wheels could move, how steadily their horses could step. The final decision was, of course, given by Mr. Carter, but the children were proud when his choice proved to be theirs as well. Their judgment was applauded when the spirited little black horse turned into the hotel courtyard on the morning of the drive. He had the usual pheasant tail feather erect over his forehead, and his driver had taken

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unusual care in brushing him and cleaning his harness. A wooden box, of exactly the right height, and many cushions, had transformed the carriage into a sort of couch, and tender hands lifted Miss Lulu in, and settled her safely beside her sister. They were to start first, that Miss Lulu should have no dust to bother her, and that her little horse should set the pace for the whole cavalcade.

The drivers on the cab rank gave them a hearty cheer as they drove past, for the children's anxiety for the comfort of the lame lady had roused genuine interest among a people curiously simple and warm of heart. With many a pause, that the excitement might not be too great, the party made their way through the smiling Plain of Sorrento, rich with orange orchards, vineyards, and olive groves.

"Small wonder that the Romans, from the Emperors down, loved to retire here, when they were old or tired," said Mr. Carter.

"People have been doing it ever since," answered Miss Kenyon.

Their horses were resting after climbing the hill beyond Meta and they were chatting as cosily as if on their own terraces at the Beau Site.

Beyond the hill, a high bridge carried them over a ravine, where the twins looked eagerly for more "monacelli," and through the busy village of Vico into the hilly country beyond. Here the road skirted the shore, which is as bold, but not so irregular as that between Sorrento and Amalfi, and came at last to Castellamare, climbing the wide tree-

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shaded avenue of the Hotel Quisisana. There, every arrangement for the Kenyons' comfort had been made, and when Miss Lulu had been safely carried to the couch beside the window of her ground floor apartment, Mrs. Carter firmly drove her brood out of the room, insisting that Miss Lulu should have the entire rest of a quiet cup of tea alone with her sister. The others might join them later.

The children found to their delight that their rooms gave on the graveled roof of a lower wing of the house, overlooking the Bay, the dusty brown waste of Pompeii, and the road to Naples. Vesuvius seemed to face them, at exactly their own level, across the valley.

"It never looks quite the same from any two places," said Alice, wonderingly. "Do you suppose father would let us go up with him?"

"He told me that the Government had not yet consented to allow anyone to go up," was Jack's reply. "See what a smoke it is sending out now."

"If 'Mr. Painter' had not told us not to, I believe I would wish to have it go off." Kate looked for the moment as if she could easily forget her admiring obedience of "Mr. Painter."

"Seems almost as if I heard something from across the valley," said Robert.

"Nonsense, silly, that's a train," scoffed Kate.

That evening, after the early dinner which had been served in the Kenyon's huge room, they all gathered about the long French windows, that were standing open to the ground. The grass of the ter-

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race showed bright green in the light from their room, but beyond that narrow strip, the garden trees fell away into darkness, while a solitary light, here and there, showed the roadways down to the village on the shore. Vesuvius rose, a dark mass of shadow, against the pale evening sky.

"I do hear something," said Robert, turning a stubborn face toward Kate.

"What does it sound like, dear?" asked his mother.

"I don't quite know. Kate said it was a train, but a train could not keep going on and on, and still keep in the same place, could it?"

They all listened intently. There was certainly a long, curious rumble, somewhere in the direction of the valley.

"If it were possible for a heavy train to cross and re-cross a trestle, down there, I should say that was what it was," was Mrs. Carter's summing up of what she heard.

"If we were near some huge mining camp, or vast foundry, I should say it was the distant moaning of machinery," said Mr. Carter.

"Both your 'ifs' make your theories impossible," said Miss Lulu, looking puzzled as the sound, though no louder, grew more distinct to their minds, after a few moments of breathless listening.

Miss Kenyon leaned closer to the window. "It is a sound that I heard once long ago, when I was here as a young girl. It is the restless, painful breathing of that mountain over there. It is like

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the wind sighing in a vast chimney, and, see, there is the flame," as a glare lit up the smoke that hovered above the crater. "It is very wonderful."

Robert shuddered a little, in spite of his determination to show no fear before Kate. "I almost wish I had not heard it," he said.

With her quick understanding of children, Miss Kenyon drew the boy close to her. "Look, Robert, can you see a little bump on the left-hand side of the mountain? It is getting too dark to see it very plainly, but it is there. That is the Observatory, and there is always some one there on watch. They understand Vesuvius far better than we can, and they always know when trouble is coming. They know that things are not quite right, now; that is why no one is allowed to go up the railway to the top. If there were trouble that could reach as far as this, they would warn the people of Castellamare. You can sleep all safe and sound to-night."

Mrs. Carter thanked her with her eyes, as the children were carried off to bed by Mademoiselle. Robert slept, as did all the children, after their long day in the open air, but just as he dropped off to sleep: "It was nice of Miss Kenyon to call it a chimney," he murmured to Jack, "but I shouldn't like to sit at the bottom of Vesuvius, and play it was a fireplace."

The morning broke fair and placid. Vesuvius had stopped its breathing, or the sound was lost in the busy noises of the day, and the tiniest, most innocent whisp of steam was floating from the crater's mouth.

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There was a pretty pink flush on Miss Lulu's cheeks when she greeted the family. "It is doing her worlds of good, this change," said Mrs. Carter. "You must both consent to stay here over to-day, while Mr. Carter goes to Naples, and then we can all go home together. There is no need of doing any sightseeing here, it is enough for us simply to sit and look out over the garden. Surely this place is well named."

The return journey to Sorrento was even easier than their first day of driving. Miss Lulu felt stronger, and less afraid of fatigue, or mischance. Her little horse trotted even more gaily and smoothly, since he felt that his face, too, was turned homeward, after a day of leisure and luxury in the Quisisana stables, and they reached the courtyard of the Beau Site before anyone had had time to get tired.

There, among the dearly loved letters from home, Mr. Carter found a courtly letter from Signor Marello, expressing his willingness to become the children's tutor, if he could be allowed to begin that work after Holy Week. He would join them wherever Mr. Carter said, but he could hardly leave his mother before the date mentioned, as it would cause her such sadness to have her eldest son away during that period. He could, if Mr. Carter wished it, come over to Naples at once and settle all questions of business, and enter his service at the date then fixed.

"It is a curious letter," said Mr. Carter, as he

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was discussing it with his wife. "I had read it quite through before I thought that I ought to be surprised that it was written in English. Miss Kenyon says that he has been in America, and that he speaks many languages. I hope he will be firm enough to speak only Italian with the children. You see I speak as if he were already one of the family."

"I really hope he will be. Of course I am taking Miss Kenyon's word about him, but I have, also, one of my impressions, about which you laugh so often. I feel sure that he is going to prove exactly what we want."

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CHAPTER X

GOOD-BY TO SORRENTO

Signor Marello crossed to Naples, in the night boat from Palermo, and presented himself to Mr. Carter, at the appointed time, as immaculately fresh as if seas were always smooth, and night traveling the height of comfort.

Their interview was businesslike and satisfactory. So far from objecting to the arrangement that Miss Kenyon called "lodging out," Signor Marello declared that he would prefer it as a permanent one, pointing out that he would be less of a drag upon their plans, if he made himself responsible for his own board and lodging, giving the children as many hours of the day for study as was thought wise, and as many for pleasant intercourse as they wished to spare him. This last being said with a courtly inclination of the head, and the rare, slow smile that the children were to learn to watch for, and love.

Mr. Carter's cordial invitation to "stay over a boat, and run out to Sorrento," was courteously declined, since it was necessary to be back in Palermo by the following morning, lest the mother be anxious, and with a promise to join them in Rome after Easter, Signor Marello took his leave.

"I wish you could have seen him," was Mr. Car-

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ter's first remark upon joining his wife in Sorrento. "Why did not Miss Kenyon warn me that he was so unlike one's idea of the ordinary Italian! He is fair, my dear, with wavy, light brown hair and eyes like nothing I have ever seen before, clear, limpid brown. I could hardly talk business with him I was so anxious to ask him about his ancestors."

Miss Kenyon laughed when this description was repeated to her. "Of course," she said, "I should have prepared you. I quite forgot that you had never seen that type. His people are of the old Norman blood that still holds itself haughtily aloof in Palermo. There must have been intermarriage somewhere in his family, though, to give him those brown eyes, but all the rest of him is pure Norman."

"Except his English, dear lady, which is pure Ohio, and sweet to my ears."

The day for leaving Sorrento drew near, and the children were devoting their time to all sorts of "last things," favorite walks, with Mademoiselle, favorite stories from Miss Lulu, and "cambric teas" on the terrace. "Mr. Painter" came over from Capri for a good-by visit, meeting the Kenyons for the first time, and joining them in the friendly giving of advice to the travelers.

"We shall miss them sadly, when they are gone," said Miss Lulu. "The terrace will seem quite empty, and the Beau Site no longer the ideal hotel it was."

"If you will take the advice of a new acquaint-

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ance," said "Mr. Painter," "you will go journeying yourselves, somewhere. There is no form of missing people so fearful as that of being left behind. I know it only too well. Get the knee better, so that a boat has no longer any terrors, and come over to Capri."

"It is not so impossible as it would have been two weeks ago. The drive to Castellamare laid so many ghosts of terror, that I feel as if almost everything might be possible."

"I believe that we should grow too homesick for Rome if we should stay on here alone," said her sister.

The word Rome acted like one of the talismans of Miss Lulu's fairy tales, and at its command open flew the doors of memory. The children, who had been allowed to sit up for dinner, almost like grown folks, sat forward in their chairs, eagerly watching first one speaker then another. For these people were talking of the history that they had seen with their very eyes. "Mr. Painter" could remember the Rome that was the Head of the Papal States, a Rome that was not so very different from the Rome that Dickens describes in his "Pictures from Italy," a Rome that was dirty, crowded and hungry, yet brilliant with the mad gayety of the Carnival; a center of pilgrimage, not only for the faithful of the Church, but for the curious, the great and the fashionable of all Europe; for the young gentleman of rank, just out of the University, and doing the "Grand Tour" with a tutor; and the "Specially

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Conducted," who were abroad in the land, even at that early date.

Miss Kenyon could remember a later Rome, that even now seemed almost as remote from present facts: a time when the nobility and the middle class folk went speculation mad, and the city was scarred with new stucco buildings, that grew ruinous and wretched before anyone would live in them; a time when old villa gardens within the walls were cut up into streets, and lined with empty useless apartments, and artists who had lived quietly in Rome for years, tore their hair, and wrote bitter letters to the newspapers, saying that the new Government was ruining all that was left of true beauty in the world.

"Mr. Painter" could remember the Coliseum over-grown with ivy, and Miss Lulu matched his story with the picture of stricken Rome bravely bearing the disaster of the Abyssinian War, and the shock of the late King's assassination.

Together, they sang the praises of the present conditions, proudly confessing that they rejoiced in the fact that Italian gold was rated as high as any in Europe, even if they, themselves, were the poorer from that fact.

Mr. Carter listened as closely as the children. "We have fallen among true believers, I see," was his comment. "Just as a poor outsider, keen to learn, you will let me ask if there are not others who think differently?"

"There are always such," answered "Mr.

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Painter." "There are many who resent the remaking and the cleaning of Rome most bitterly. But after all, the Italian of to-day has got to live in his country, and he naturally gets a touch tired of the foreigner, who is forever telling him how precious are his antiques, and just how he should care for them and preserve them for that same foreigner's pleasure."

"Tell me, please, are the empty apartments still standing neglected and forlorn in Rome's new quarters?"

"No, I am thankful to say. Two or three things happened to rescue them. Time proved that the speculators were right, though many of them suffered ruin while waiting for time's help. The improved sanitation, the increased comforts in living, drew many strangers to the city, and there was a demand for apartments. The Queen Mother, after King Humbert's death, withdrew from the Quirinal, of course, and made one of the beautiful old villas her home. Naturally that drew a large following to the quarter she had chosen, and apartments built along the streets, where once were the gardens of that same old villa, went at a premium. It is by no means easy to find a good empty apartment in Rome nowadays, is it, Miss Kenyon?"

"Indeed, no. Oh!" turning to Mrs. Carter, "I do so wish I could be in Rome with you, to show you things in just the way that I think the best. It does make such a difference how you go about it."

"Our greatest concern, now, is how to get there

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comfortably. Can not you give us some advice?" asked Mr. Carter.

"My advice would be to resign yourselves to a long train journey, secure a compartment for your party, and take a good big basket lunch. There are dining cars, but the hurry and crush are not pleasant."

"We can only echo 'Mr. Painter,'" said Miss Kenyon, "with this addition. Be sure and look out for Monte Cassino. It will be on the right hand side of the train. It is the only really interesting thing in the whole journey, and is far more like a castle than a monastery."

"You can give yourselves one comfort, in your long railway journey," said "Mr. Painter," "just think how much more tedious it must have been in the romantic days of the post-chaise. Imagine driving for days over the rough, dusty roads, and crossing the frontier, from the Kingdom of Naples into the Papal States. The artists who scold us for being modern, forget the discomfort of the picturesque past."

"Wouldn't it be jolly to drive, some, 'Mr. Painter'?"

"Of course it would, Jack. You will be doing it probably, indeed you have done some here on the Sorrento Peninsula."

"But that was just for excursions. I mean to travel that way."

"Yes, even to travel that way, is, as you say, jolly; all the more so, because you do not have to

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do it. Nowadays, 'posting' as they used to call it, has all the fun of the unusual. More than that, when you get tired of the carriage, you can desert it and take a train. However, I hope there will always be enough people left in the world to keep the love of driving alive, for the automobile is upon us. It breaks my heart to see tourists racing through Italy, of all countries in the world, as if smoke and noise and speed had any place in our quiet roads."

"You, too, are joining the ranks of artists who scold us for being modern," said Miss Lulu, with a low laugh.

"I plead guilty. Have we not each some weak spot in our armor, when we set out to criticize other folks?"

"It is good-night time, and good-by time, children," said Mrs. Carter, gently. "We don't like saying either. I doubt very much if you kind people have any idea how much we feel as if we were leaving home in going away from you, and from this lovely spot."

The full moon was making a wide path of light across the Bay as the children began, most regretfully, to say their polite good-bys. They made a pretty picture, greeting in turn each one of the group gathered about Miss Lulu's couch. It was for her that Kate made the quaint bobbing courtesy of her dancing class, and Robert performed the company bow of which he was almost ashamed. It was to her that Alice gave a shy little kiss, for her that Jack saved his last word: "Good-by, Miss Lulu, take

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care of yourself. We are going to drop a penny in the Fountain of Trevi, the very first thing, so that you can get well enough to go to Capri, even if you can not come to us."

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CHAPTER XI

ROME

"I had never imagined that our being in Rome would mean housekeeping." Mrs. Carter was standing by the fireplace looking about the pretty sitting-room of the Kenyons' apartment. Bare floors, and soft gray rugs, many books and a few choice water-colors, made a charming interior.

"It is all most homelike and simple. We shall certainly bless Alice and her trick of scraping acquaintances. If it had not been for her we should never have known 'the lady that sits in the corner and knits.' Where are the children, now? I am not used to having space enough to lose them!"

"Mademoiselle is trying to get them tidy after their journey. They have rather close quarters, here, but the rooms are full of sunshine, and it will do them good to have the run of a home of their own, for a while."

"Mother, Mother," Alice's voice traveled faster than her feet, along the narrow hall. "Have you seen the kitchen? It is the dearest, doll-baby-house place you ever saw. The stove is just a kind of tiled counter, and the fire lives in funny little pockets, on the top, and Philomena says she will —"

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"Alice, Alice child! Philomena must be trying to get dinner. You must not bother her."

"Oh, Philomena says she is a grandmother, and doesn't mind at all having children about."

"And Mother," Jack joined in, "the dining-room windows overlook the loveliest garden, and Philomena says it belongs to some one in the Chinese Embassy, and there is such a funny baby out there, and a funnier nurse."

Mr. Carter laughed aloud. "I foresee that 'Philomena says' will become a by-word. I can not understand how the children have picked up so much Italian, even with Miss Kenyon's help. However they got it, it is a great blessing, and it doesn't begin to take the time to express itself that mine does. Now listen, every last one of you," he added, drawing the twins, who had just escaped from Mademoiselle's ministrations, and were very clean and shining, close to his knees, "the first whole day in a new town is a holiday, with no work for father, so you must all sleep hard to-night, and wake up bright and early to-morrow, ready for a good, long day. And now does anyone know just what he wants to see first in Rome?"

"All of it," answered Alice promptly.

"Saint Peter's." This from Jack.

"Mademoiselle says the Pope."

"The Pope," echoed Kate, since in their relation to the outside world, the twins had but one voice between them.

"Really, Robert, you and Mademoiselle ask for

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something that is not so easy to get. The Pope and his household live in a huge palace beside Saint Peter's, and the gardens are shut in by big, high walls."

"What makes him live like that, Father?"

"Why, when this new Italy, that you hear me talk about so often, grew big and strong enough to be a real country, she naturally wanted Rome for her capital. Now the Pope wanted to keep Rome, but he did not have an army that could prevent the King from taking it. Besides a good many Romans wanted to belong to the King. So the King, this present King's grandfather, and a great man, came into Rome and made the Quirinal his palace, while the Pope retired to the Vatican, and called himself a prisoner. I think, though, that if his successor thought best to come out into the world, no one would deny him his right to do so. You see, there are two courts in Rome: The Pope rules the Vatican, and the great Roman Catholic Church all over the world; and the King does his best to rule Italy wisely, and make her respected and honored among the nations."

"People are born Kings. Are people born Popes, Father?" asked Kate thoughtfully.

"No, dear, Popes are elected. When a Pope dies, the Cardinals, who are the great Princes of the Church, get together, and elect a new Pope from among their own number."

"Your demand is the next hardest to meet, Alice. It would be a rash person who tried to see all of

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Ruins of the Forum—Rome

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Rome in the first day. They used to tell a story of the late Pope, who was fond of asking people how long they had been in Rome. To the first one, who said he had been here seven days, he remarked: 'Ah, and I feel sure that you know it all thoroughly.' To the next, who said he had been here seven weeks, he said: 'You probably are beginning to suspect that there are still things to see and learn in Rome.' To the student, who had lingered here seven long years, the Pope said, with his wonderful, gentle smile: 'Now you, I am sure, are just beginning to realize how little you really know about this marvelous city.'"

"According to that it would take far more years than we have to spare, just now, to carry out the half of your wish, Alice," said her mother. "You had better make a more modest one. How much do you know about Roman history?"

"Oh, just fairy tales, I guess. Romulus and Remus, and the wolf, and such things."

"Miss Kenyon said we could see a wolf, but not *the* wolf, in a cage on the Capitol steps," remarked Robert, seriously.

"*The* wolf would be dead, silly," whispered Kate, "it was ever so long ago."

"Well, perhaps we had better make the wolf our starting point, as that seems to be pretty near the beginning of Rome. Perhaps, though, you have some other plan, my dear," for Mrs. Carter was hunting busily in her hand-bag.

"Miss Kenyon gave me a letter which she said

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was for our first day in Rome. She repeated how sorry she was not to be here herself, she so loved playing guide. Here it is," and she pulled out a fat envelope that proved to be filled with closely written pages, and two or three visiting cards. "Really, I never saw such kindly people. She and her sister have mapped out our first two or three days most beautifully, and here are cards to several of their friends, to whom they have written about us. We are to be sure to have Philomena's young cousin, Antonio, who has a good two-horse cab, to take us about. His wife, too, is a splendid laundress. Really, Robert, I feel almost ashamed to be taking so much kindness from people who were strangers so short a time ago!"

"I am sure they loved doing it. I can almost see them now, Miss Kenyon sitting close to Miss Lulu's couch on the terrace, planning it all out as she writes. Now, come, children; it is first dinner, then bed, and a good night's sleep. You remember what the old farmer at grandpa's used to say: 'We've got more things to do to-morrow than we can shake a stick at.'"

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CHAPTER XII

THE SEVEN HILLS

"Can you pack us all into your cab, Antonio?" asked Mrs. Carter, "we are happier when we are together."

Antonio's horses had been pawing the smooth stones of the courtyard most invitingly for quite fifteen minutes, before the family could be got ready. As soon as everyone was settled, with a twin, like a ripe raisin, stuck safely in the middle of each seat, the cab clattered gaily out under the archway, and down the sunny length of Via Venti Settembre.

"What happened on the twentieth of September, Mother?" asked Alice.

"King Victor Emanuel and his troops came into the city, and Rome began to be the Capital of Italy. 'United Italy' they could call her truly, then. Here is the King's Palace."

Each and all, the children voted the long, brown building too much like other people's to be very interesting.

"We are leaving one of the seven original hills, Jack," said Mr. Carter, as they turned down by the Colonna Gardens; "that was the Quirinal; it still gives its name to the King's Palace. Now we are going to another, the Capitol." The carriage

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passed along busy, modern Via Nationale, past the forbidding old walls of the Venetian Palace, and the gigantic newness of King Victor Emanuel's Statue, and drew up at the foot of a broad stone stairway. Mrs. Carter, after consulting Miss Kenyon's letter, gave Antonio careful directions, whereupon he nodded cheerfully, and drove away, somewhat to the dismay of the family.

"It is all right, we shall find him again when we want him."

Slowly they climbed the wide stair, turning to look eagerly in all directions. It was Robert who first discovered the sorry-looking wolf, pacing back and forth in her narrow cage, halfway up the hill, on the left-hand side of the stairs.

"They might have given her a little more room to be comfortable in, mightn't they, Robert, considering that her ancestress helped to found the town?"

A little more climbing, and they stood close to the bronze warrior on the bronze horse that guards the top of the stair. As Mrs. Carter held both the guide-book and Miss Kenyon's letter, all questions were directed toward her.

"Who was this man, Mother?"

"You tell me something about him, Jack, just from what you see."

"Well, he must have been a Roman, from his armor, and he has no stirrups. He certainly is calm looking."

"That is not so bad, for a beginner in the observation class. He was the good Emperor, Marcus

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Aurelius; all the portrait busts of him have that same calm look."

"But, Mother, he does not look as if he belonged here, everything else looks so new."

"Patience, son, we will leave these big buildings, which are not as new as they look. They are Museums, and some day we will go through them, but to-day, we are not going inside of anything, if we can help it. Now, come down along this narrow street." She stopped as she reached a curious paved square, like the landing of a huge stairway, and drew them all to the parapet.

"What is it?" asked Alice almost in a whisper.

Below them, in the clear morning light, lay the Forum, dusty yellow and shining white, a mass of broken columns and shattered marbles, with groups of devoted sightseers, drifting from one object of interest to another.

"I want to get down there, and dig," announced Robert decidedly.

"A few other people have wanted to do that for several years, and some have succeeded. It is not so very long since all that was covered in several feet deep, and grass grew over everything, except where a stray column or two stood half-buried, marking the site of no one remembered quite what."

"I saw a picture like that once in London," said Mr. Carter. "It was painted by a great French painter, while he was a 'Prix de Rome' student. It was just a stretch of rough ground and ragged grass, with yellow brown buildings for a background,

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and in the foreground, those three columns, and some peasants with their cows. They used to call it 'the field of the cows,' didn't they?"

"Yes, and all the time it was really the center of the Rome that the Good Emperor knew. See, when an Emperor came home after a victory, his Triumphal Procession wound all along the length of the Sacred Way, down there. Sometimes he built an arch, like the one close below us, or sometimes he built a temple. They liked to be 'in the papers,'— or in the public eye, just as much as our people do."

"Do you know what that big, round building is, quite at the other end of things, Alice?" asked her father.

"I am not sure, but it looks like the picture over Grandmother's mantelpiece."

"You are right, it must be the Coliseum. We will go there, some moonlight night, if mother will let you older children sit up long enough."

"There is another picture at home, of some chariots racing. Was that in the Coliseum?"

"No, Jack, that was in the Circus Maximus, I think. Just where was that, Lady of the Guide-book?"

"Over there, behind the Palatine, to our right. Beyond that again, the low hill, with the trees, is the Aventine. It looks more like country than town now, but in the old days it was crowded with the houses of the 'Plebs,' the every-day folks of Rome. Come, we are going over there for our luncheon, at

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that low building, with the terraces. There is Antonio, waiting for us at the foot of these steps."

Their road wound round the base of the Palatine, giving them a glimpse of the Tiber, before it rose toward the vineyards and tree-shaded lanes of the Aventine. Then their progress was slow, for every Italian driver takes the slightest hill at a snail's pace.

The terrace of the Café Constantino overlooked all that was the Rome of the Cæsars, and much of the Rome of to-day. After their luncheon, the Carters gathered at its edge, eager to trace out the road by which they had come.

"Tell us some more stories, Father, with just a *little* history in them." History was not Kate's strong point.

"There is so much history under our feet that it would be hard to tell a story without some of it. What does Miss Kenyon say about the view from here, Katherine?"

Mrs. Carter turned to the closely written pages. "This is just like her," she laughed, "listen: 'when you get to the view from the Aventine, simply enjoy it! Far be it from me to spoil it by pointing out things!'"

"We can not help enjoying it, and while we are doing that let us have a little geography, since Kate is tired of history."

Robert shouted, for all the family knew Kate's hatred of geography. Kate herself chuckled, since one of the first rules in the household discipline was

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" be able to take a joke against yourself, and don't spoil a family laugh by sulking."

" Never mind, Kate, geography is not so bad, when you have been driving and walking over it, instead of digging it out of a book. You ought to be able to tell me how many of the old Roman hills we have seen this morning."

Kate insisted on being allowed to think a moment, and then answered slowly: " We drove down the Quirinal, and climbed up and down the Capital. Then we looked at the Palatine, and now we have eaten on the Aventine."

" Good, you will be able to remember them that way. Now, how many hills were there? — of old Rome I mean," for the child's eyes had wandered hopelessly to the far horizon, where Monte Cavo topped the Alban Hills.

" I don't know."

" Three," said Jack, " I don't remember their names; I only know there were seven in all."

" Well, one of them is off at one side. That particular one always did get lost out of any jingle one made in trying to remember them. The others divide up into sets, four of one kind, two of another."

" We will not bother with the Latin names, but we shall have to call the one over there Capitoline, to make any rhyme at all. What are its mates, Alice? "

" Palatine, I suppose, and oh, yes, Aventine. Then, if there are three alike, there must be a

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fourth, but I don't know it. Then the other one must rhyme with Quirinal."

"Good reasoning, perhaps Mother and the map can help us out."

"Viminal, to go with Quirinal, and your lost one of the quartette is the Esquiline. Those two new ones lie there, beyond the Forum, but they hardly look like hills at all from here."

"Please, what is the little lost one beside us?" asked Kate, now thoroughly converted to geography on the spot.

"That is the Caelian. You see it doesn't rhyme with any of the others, and it doesn't seem to want to belong with them. I always had the greatest difficulty in remembering it at all when I was in school."

"What's the use of remembering, anyway?" asked Robert, digging his toe restlessly into the soft earth.

"You can see for yourself what happened to me. I had to ask Mother, and that has made her feel very superior," laughed Mr. Carter. "It is much better to remember yourself."

"Mother feels so superior," answered Mrs. Carter, "that she is going to order you all back to the carriage, since these little folks have had all the view and history that they can digest. It will not be possible to follow all of Miss Kenyon's day, as she has planned it, so we will just drive here and there, discovering what we can, without trying too hard."

Antonio took the new orders with sympathetic

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understanding, and drove them through the old quarters by the river, pointing out the island, with its terraced sides, telling them how terrible " Father Tiber " used to be before he was safely shut in by the modern embankments; tossing bits of broken English and crisp Roman Italian back over his shoulder at the children, behaving as only a happy-hearted Italian can behave when he has a family of kindly strangers in charge. After many turns and twists, he brought them out on the Pincian Hill, in time to join for a little in Rome's fashionable " promenade by carriage," and so home, to find that Philomena had spread out a tempting tea, with the " leetle cakes " that Miss Kenyon loved.

" Surely, our lines have fallen in pleasant places," said Mrs. Carter, as she seated herself to feed her hungry brood.

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CHAPTER XIII

SAINT PETER'S

"Antonio says that he won't be able to take us driving any more, Mother."

"Why, what does he mean, Jack? Is he ill?"

"It is something to do with the strike," interrupted Alice. "Philomena has been crying about it. She says it's a shame to call the cabs off the streets, just at Easter time, when all the foreigners are here, wanting to drive, and not minding what they pay for it."

"Antonio says he isn't as badly off as some of the cab drivers because his wife takes in washing. Nobody has asked her to strike."

"Katie, where did you get that? You children do certainly pick up the most extraordinary bits of information. I thought the cabmen had had their strike before we came to Rome. Miss Kenyon was certainly telling us about it at Sorrento. She seemed to think the men were in the right, and that the difficulty had been settled to their advantage. Here comes your father. Perhaps he can straighten it out for us."

"What has gone crooked?" was Mr. Carter's cheery greeting, since he had caught only his wife's last words.

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"Why should the cabmen be striking again? We do not see how we can get along without Antonio."

"It is really very hard on the cabfolk. They have no grievance. The trouble started in some printing office, and now a general sympathetic strike is called. It looks rather threatening, but I do not think there is any danger, for peace-loving folk like ourselves. The police is excellent, and the entire town has been quietly filling up with soldiers. Didn't you hear the tramp of feet in the middle of the night? It woke me about three o'clock. The soldiers are already taking possession of the few trams that are running, and no one is allowed to stand long in any one place, not even to read the Government placards."

"Oh, that is why a soldier came with our baker's boy this morning," cried Robert Junior. "Philomena was teasing him for being afraid to come alone. Are they trying to shut up the bakers' shops?"

"They threatened to shut up all the shops, but the Government placards quietly remind the shopkeepers that they have to have licenses to keep open, and that the Government issues the licenses. Then the placards end by saying that the soldiers will protect the shopkeepers, and help them in their work. Above all the comfort and the health of the public must not be endangered. It is all very simple and dignified. There is a certain advantage in being a Kingdom, sometimes."

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The River Tiber, with View of St. Peter's and the Castle of St. Angelo

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"But, Robert, do you think it safe for us to go out? It is too bad to keep the children indoors all day, if it is not necessary."

"Go out by all means. It would be too far to walk down into the old town, so you won't be tempted to wander into the 'danger zone,' as they call the Corso. I should avoid the streets with trams."

"Do you suppose we can all get to Saint Peter's, on Thursday? I should be so sorry to miss that particular service."

"The trouble may be all over by then. There are still two days for things to quiet down."

"May I come in? Philomena is so used to having me run in and out, when the Kenyons are here, that it never occurred to her to give you any warning of my coming." A slender, sweet-faced woman stood in the sitting-room doorway, her figure so lightly poised that it seemed as if she could easily fly away, if she were not wanted.

"You must be Madame Bianchi," was Mrs. Carter's quick reply. "Miss Kenyon has spoken of you so often, that introductions are not needed. How good of you to come to us."

"Lulu Kenyon wrote me to call without fail. I had meant to do it with more formality, but this strike business has come up, and I thought you might be worried. Please don't be! It won't last long, the Government is very firm and the soldiers loyal. More than that our people are not really bad, even when they go on strike. They are terribly excit-

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able, and look as if they were going to do awful things, but they are good children at heart."

"Pardon me for seeming rude, but you surely are not Italian, even though you speak of 'our people.'"

Madame Bianchi smiled with her eyes, after a fashion that drew the twins to her knees by common consent. "I am Italian in the eyes of the law, because my husband is Italian. By birth I am of the nation that has a soft spot in its heart for all the mad children of the world that go forth to right the wrong with a stick in one hand and a stone in the other. I am Irish."

The children gathered about her, as if she had called them. There was such a fascination to them in finding some one who was almost of their own people, who spoke their own tongue, with a delicious little burr that added untold charm, who was so wholly at home in a life that had seemed wholly foreign to them. She answered their questions as simply as they asked them, and in a very short time there were no reserves in the newly formed friendship.

"Isn't there something I can do for you besides just sitting here and chattering? I have a friend's motor waiting outside; would not you all like to run out on the Campagna, away from this naughty town that is so upset, and get some fresh air?"

Hardly was the invitation given before a merry group was being stowed away in the big gray car that had been waiting outside. Out through the

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Porta Pia they went, and along the street of high houses that march out into the country as if they were not willing to leave the town behind. A few sharp turns and the real country was about them, brown and bare, that wide treeless plain that all Romans, born or adopted, learn to love, that stretches far to the south, where the Alban hills rise against the sky.

Madame Bianchi pointed out the scattered plantations of eucalyptus trees, which were doing so much to clear the air of the dreaded malaria. At the same time she laughingly assured them that that same malaria was somewhat of a bogie. "As a matter of fact, Rome is not unhealthy, even in summer, and the dreaded Roman fever of our old-fashioned novels, is almost a thing of the past. Signor Bianchi laughs at me, and calls me 'more Roman than the Romans.' I confess that I am passionately devoted to my adopted home."

"It does not seem as if there were any such place as Rome in the whole world just now," said Mrs. Carter, as her eyes roamed over the plain before them.

"Wait a moment," answered Signora Bianchi. "I have brought you out here for one especial view, just that the children may take one big, simple picture away with them. Look."

The car swung round toward the direction that they all knew must mean Rome, but the great city, pagan, mediæval and modern, was lost in the blue distance. Only the mass of the Vatican, topped by

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the wonder-dome of Saint Peter's, stood out against the evening sky. Deep blue, almost purple, it hung in the clear sky, and the Tiber seemed to wind from it almost to their feet.

"It is very beautiful," said Mr. Carter quietly. The children looked with all their eyes, since this was the picture that their new friend wanted them to remember.

"You have to come as far away as this, to get a good view of it. In Rome there are lovely vistas, but no way of getting an idea of the cathedral as a whole. You are going there for some of the services this week?"

"We had planned to go on Thursday, for 'the washing of the altar,' if this strike does not prevent our getting back and forth. We are rather a large family to transport," answered Mr. Carter.

"Be sure and take plenty of camp-stools; Philomena will rout them out of some cupboard for you. No Roman goes to a long church ceremony without a camp-stool. And please go early, find a good place as near the grand altar as you can get, and sit quietly, if the waiting is not too hard on the little folks. We suffer sometimes," she added gently, "from the attitude of people who take our church services as sightseeing."

Mrs. Carter looked the question she would not have dreamed of asking, and the Signora answered quite simply.

"I have always been so glad that I was a Roman Catholic, before ever I saw Signor Bianchi. I

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should hate to think that I had been influenced in that even by my love for him."

The car had been speeding quietly homeward, and they were soon at the Carters' door. Antonio saluted them gravely as they turned in at the archway, and the Signora stopped to speak to him, as to an old friend, regretting his enforced idleness, and hoping that things would be all right before long.

"You will soon be driving our friends about again, won't you?" she asked.

"Who can tell," was his reply, the patient, philosophical reply that meets so many questions in Italy, where old and young lay their difficulties so frankly on the knees of the gods.

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CHAPTER XIV

HOLY THURSDAY

While the family was finishing its early luncheon on Holy Thursday, Philomena came to the dining-room door and begged to be allowed a moment of "confidence with Madame." Madame was used to these appeals; they usually concerned themselves with serious matters of butter and eggs, and the many details of home life that were making the days in Rome a storehouse of pleasant memories for the days to come. This time, however, there was evidently more in the air, for Mrs. Carter came back to the table with what her husband called her "fine, wise smile" on her face, and refused to give any explanation of her interview in the kitchen.

It had been decided that the tram would be a safe method of getting down to Saint Peter's. The day before, there had been a little breaking of windows, and a few differences between the crowd and the motor-men, but Mr. Carter had ridden in one that very morning, and had encountered nothing worse than closed shutters and a military guard. So, armed with camp-chairs and light wraps, the entire family made its way to the tram near the station. It was crowded, but everyone was good-natured, and the little ones were helped and pushed into

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places of safety. It was a long ride, made longer by the closed shutters, through which the children tried vainly to peer out upon the streets that had grown so familiar to them. Once in a while the hoarse murmur of many voices told them that some crowd was gathered at a street corner, or before some Government placard. A few cabs were creeping along the streets in furtive fashion, and the report was that the cabmen, mindful that Easter was their harvest time, could not be held in check any longer.

The great Piazza of Saint Peter's was black with people, the human tide setting steadily toward the Cathedral doors. There was nothing to do but join the masses of slowly moving people, and drift, as they did, into the cool, dark interior.

"I had no idea of such a dense crowd," whispered Mr. Carter to his wife. "Shall we ever be able to get the children home, safe and sound?"

"Chi lo sa" (who can tell) came Mrs. Carter's gay reply. "Don't worry, dear, we shall be all right. This is far too wonderful for them to have missed."

The children had seen Saint Peter's before, and had wandered through its huge distances, a little over-awed that such a tremendous space should be shut in by a roof at all. No previous idea of a church that any of them had had, could be fitted to this great pattern, and they had simply accepted it as something too big to question, almost too big to consider as real.

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The Saint Peter's of this Thursday afternoon was something quite different. The floor was covered with people, mostly in black, for Holy Week, to the Catholic, is a period of mourning, and the high arches seemed all the higher for this darkness at their base. The choir was misty with incense, and from beyond the grating came the slow chanting of the service of the "Tenebrae." The High Altar, usually adorned with symbols over-ornate to the average mind, stood bare and white, awaiting its purification. By dint of clinging together in the crowd, the Carter family unconsciously formed a compact wedge, and made their way, simply with the drift of the currents about them, close to the altar rail. There, they settled on their camp-stools, the grown people of the party acting as a barrier to protect the children from the attacks of the crowd that literally beat against them in its frantic effort to get nearer to something, it hardly knew what.

To the younger children, the whole picture was becoming a dream. Robert and Kate nestled closer to their mother, holding her hands. Mademoiselle followed the service with the reverence and love of one who understands, bowing her head as the glorious chords of the "Miserere" swept out through the vast church. Alice and Jack were growing wide-eyed, watching the swaying masses about them, and the tall white figures of the Saints of the Passion, in their marble niches under the dome.

Their mother was glad when the procession came

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to break the spell that was falling over them all. In the distance, the choir gates opened, and two little boys, in scarlet robes and lace overdresses came swinging censers, from which thin trails of smoke marked the rising of the incense. Older men followed, bearing curiously shaped jars, filled with the wine for washing the altar. As they poured it over the marble, the dry odor mingled with the incense. Then, in stately order, came the dignitaries of the church, each with his lamb's wool mop, the size graded to the rank of its bearer, to touch the altar as a symbol of its cleansing. Tottering old Cardinals and strong young priests in their prime, they moved regularly forward, touched the altar, and receded. At last there came a pause. After an interval, there came one man alone, a tall, swaying figure, in wonderful trailing robes of scarlet. The pale oval face held a touch of worldly wisdom in the midst of its spiritual beauty. A whisper went round: "The Secretary of State the Power behind the Pope!"

With his passing, the ceremony of washing the altar was over. The people still lingered, and all faces were raised to the tribunes over the great arches of the dome. There, one by one, through the dusk that was partly incense and partly falling night, the relics of the Passion were exposed to faithful and unbeliever alike.

"Mother," whispered Jack, "does Signora Bianchi believe all this? Does she belong to it?" He thought a moment, and then added hesitatingly:

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"I wish somehow that I belonged to it, but it seems as if I couldn't."

Kate stood up and stretched herself with a long sigh. "I'm just awfully tired, and I want to go home!"

They waited until the crowd had thinned a little and then made their way slowly to the Piazza. It was bare save for straggling groups of black-clad worshipers on their way home. They looked very small in the huge place in the darkness of the early evening. There was not a cab in sight, and the trams had evidently stopped running. Mr. Carter looked anxiously at his tired brood, but his wife gave him a reassuring little nod.

"Philomena and I have hatched a plot," she said. "Come this way; it will be all right."

Under her guidance, they turned into a narrow street at their left, where in a shadowy corner a cab that looked vaguely familiar was waiting them.

"Antonio," cried Alice with a little squeal of delight.

"Even I," he answered in his crisp, clipped Roman dialect. "It is quite safe, if we go by the back streets, for no one will interfere. All the cabs will be back on the streets to-morrow, and to-night will not count, since no one will know."

Gladly they tucked themselves into the familiar corners of the old cab. If the children could have kept awake they would have been immensely interested in the out-of-the-way streets through which they made their way home. The long afternoon

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had been too much for them, however, and they were more than half-asleep when Antonio swept them into their home courtyard, and into Philomena's motherly arms.

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CHAPTER XV.

THE VINEYARD

"Signora Bianchi has asked us all to come out to her vineyard for the afternoon. Can you spare the time, Robert?"

Four eager faces turned toward the head of the table, for excursions that included "father" were sure of success.

"I am to be busy until two o'clock, but perhaps I can arrange to meet you on your way. How do you go?"

"She told us to take cabs to the gate on the Janiculum, San Pancrazio, isn't it? She said she would meet us there."

"Perhaps I had better do the same, meet you there, I mean. I should like to see Signor Bianchi; he has had a great deal to do with building the new part of Rome."

"Yes, and he would sooner die than live anywhere than in his old apartment in the oldest part of the town," laughed Mrs. Carter.

"Well, I must be off. It seems quite like home to be leaving the family at the breakfast table, and hurrying away to business. It is a long drive to the Janiculum, and you had better allow an hour. I will be at the gate at three o'clock."

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"Very well; run and tell Philomena that we shall want lunch an half-hour earlier, Alice."

It needed no second bidding to send Alice to the shining kitchen she so loved. Mr. Carter declared that his daughter's Italian would be all kitchen talk, but that Philomena's Tuscan accent would redeem it.

At two o'clock, Antonio drove his cab into the courtyard with a flourish of the whip, and the little party set forth to a chorus of friendly "good-bys" and "good-lucks" from the leisurely groups that seem to grow in Italian courtyards. These standers-by and friends of the house servants were becoming very fond of the American family that was "in residence," and watched its comings and goings with neighborly delight.

The long drive across Rome was a never failing pleasure. The wide shining streets of their own new quarter, the plunge into the old town, up and down the famous hills that were "only step-ladder high" as Alice scornfully remarked, and the coming out upon the river, always held some surprises in store. The Tiber, whose yellow-brown tones are the despair of artists, was curling lazily around the bend below the bridge as they crossed.

"It would not be much of a swim to-day," said Jack, who never forgot his "Horatius," but was always uncertain as to just where he had crossed the river.

"Rome was very little in those days, not much more than the Palatine, and some of the Capital.

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The bridge they held was somewhere down there," said Mrs. Carter.

"Oh, dear! It seems to me there were just as many beginnings and what-used-to-bes in Rome as there are at home."

"Anyway, Horatius happened a little before the Alamo, and Davy Crockett," retorted Alice.

The horses plodded serenely between the tree-topped walls on either side of the long road up the Janiculum hill, and stopped just inside the gate. Even the devoted Antonio could not go a footpace outside the walls without charging an extra fare.

Mr. Carter was waiting for them, standing beside Signora Bianchi, and her son, a delicate looking boy of fifteen. "Are you clad for a bit of country walk?" was her greeting as the cab drew near. "It is only across a field or two, but it is really rough. Are the little ones equal to it?"

"Look at them," laughed Mrs. Carter, "they could outwalk us all." The twins had already seized upon their hostess's son, while Alice and Jack, a touch more shy, stood waiting some further introduction.

"You take charge of them all, and lead the way, Allessandro, and we will follow. Now find out each other's names, and you will soon be well acquainted. Don't be frightened, children, he speaks English as easily as you do. They make a pretty picture, don't they?" she said to Mrs. Carter, smiling at the group that was already well in advance, across the fields. I wish my boy were as ruddy as

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yours. His life in town is so shut in, and out here he is lonely."

"Send him over to us, for a year or two in Texas," cried Mr. Carter.

Mrs. Carter laughed at the dismay in the Signora's face. "Confess," she said, "Texas seems farther away and more terrible to you than China itself. You must forgive Mr. Carter for trying to steal your boy. He can not help feeling — forgive me — that boys in France and Italy are, as you say, terribly shut in. He wants to get them all out where they can play."

"Ours are having at least a little run," was Signora Bianchi's reply, pointing with her walking stick to the children, who were scampering over the second field toward a low white wall. At the narrow green gate, they stopped abruptly.

"I have a key, but we do not go in before our mothers," announced Allessandro gravely, and opening the door he stood at attention until the older people had passed through.

Jack and Alice looked at each other. It was their silent signal that here was something to be talked over later. They loved their parents, and of course would not dream of crowding into a room before them, but so much ceremony at a gate in a wall was new in their experience. Kate and Robert, not at all disturbed by differences in training, were staring about the garden in frank enjoyment of its sunny spaces and deep shadows.

"But it is all so funny!" said Robert, planting

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his sturdy legs far apart, and studying the big enclosure.

"Why funny?" asked Allessandro, to whom it all seemed most natural.

"Oh, cities stop so quick in Italy," was the reply. "First a lot of streets and then a gate in the wall, and we are out in the fields all at once. And now we are inside a wall, again, and can't see over I don't like not seeing over!"

This last was almost a cry, and Signor Bianchi turned from welcoming his wife's guests to smile in kindly fashion into Robert's pouting face.

"We are used to living inside walls, little man. We needed them so long, just to keep safe and alive, that now we should not feel at home without them. But there is a way to see over. Take them up into the loggia, Allessandro. Be careful where the stair turns. Tell them how the place happened to be built."

Down through the close rows of stiff grape stalks that covered the greater part of the enclosure, the children found their way to a long, narrow building that seemed all arches and windows. These arches, some boarded up, and some open, enclosed the lower story.

"Is it a cellar, or a barn?" asked Alice, her quick eye caught by the rakes and hoes standing about in the cool shadows.

"Oh, I don't know, it is just a place to put things." Allessandro had the fine contempt that most Italians feel toward the ground floor of a

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building. "Here we are at the staircase. It is dark, let's take hold of hands."

They were certainly very dark for a few turns, those stairs; then they grew lighter, and finally Allessandro pushed aside a panel and led his guests into a room that brought a good, round "Oh!" from every American mouth. It was long and narrow, and full of sunshine and blue sky, since three of its sides were made up of windows, reaching from the floor to the painted ceiling.

"There isn't much more furniture than they have in Royal Palaces," said Jack, whose mind was full of the shining emptiness of royal show rooms. "Say, Allessandro, don't people ever sit down in palaces?"

"I suppose they really live somewhere, and they have to have chairs to sit on, but they don't show those rooms. I don't know anything about that sort of thing. Our family, you see, are just every-day people. Father says that is what keeps us comfortable and happy. Mother says, though, that when a family has been 'just every-day people' for five or six hundred years, it might just as well be noble, it is so tied up with ideas, and stories about its ancestors."

"You were going to tell us a story," chimed in Kate, whose heart never forgot such a promise.

"We'll come back here by and by then. That's tea over behind the screen. Come along." Quite unconscious of the amazement of the others, who saw no way of getting out, and had forgotten how

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they had got in, he led the way to another panel that yielded to his hand, and showed the beginning of another stone stairway. A sturdy climb brought them to the loggia, a lovely roof-piazza, with long rows of pillars, and a sheltered corner or two.

Robert jumped up and down with glee. Never since he had come to Rome, had he been able so completely to "see over things." The great Roman Plain stretched away below them, rising gently to the northern hills, and the warm afternoon sun lay over everything. The children settled themselves contentedly in one of the sheltered corners, grouping themselves around Allessandro.

"Story," demanded Kate laconically.

"It isn't much of a story, but it is the way this happened to be built, as father said. One of my 'great-greats' as mother calls them was a Frenchwoman. Just a little girl, we would call her, but people married young in those days, and she was only fifteen when she came here from Versailles."

"Oh, we know Versailles," cried Alice, "and all the pretty cottages by the lake, where the Queen played at being dairymaid."

"Well, the little 'great-great'— she must have been several greats — grandmother knew it, too, in just those days, before the pretty toy people had their heads cut off. She had played at servant in one of the cottages. So when her husband, who was older than she, lots, brought her to our big, dark apartment in Rome, she thought it lonely and gloomy. She used to wander all about the rooms,

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or sit and stare out of the big windows. This vineyard has always belonged to us, but there was only the custode's hut down there, in the way of a building. For the sake of the little French lady, this place was built. Father says that the ground floor is just farm, the big salon is French, and up here is all Italian."

"I think up here is just Heaven," murmured Alice, hugging her knees. "Did the little French lady come up here and sit?"

"Yes, and, after a while, she used to bring her children out here to play. Then she said she, too, was all Italian, and not homesick any more, since this was now her home."

"Allessandro, if you had a French ancestress, and your father is Italian and your mother Irish, what are you?" Jack looked puzzled.

"Father says that I am just a little Irish boy, but Mother says that I must grow up to be an Italian gentleman. You see, I am the last Bianchi of our branch, and of course I can not be anything but Italian."

"Come down, children," called the Signora's pleasant voice. "Tea is ready, and we must finish and get back to town before the twilight falls, and the mists rise."

"Do you go back to Rome, too?" asked Kate shyly. "I thought you lived out here, in this pretty place."

"Why, there is nothing out here to live in, dear. This is only a playhouse. When the weather is

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bright, we come out here every day though, and you must come again some time."

Their tea was a merry one. In her household, Signora Bianchi's nationality asserted itself, and all who came near her were happy. Indeed, Signor Bianchi declared that he had never been wholly warm, contented and comfortable until she had taken charge of him and his home.

On their return drive, Alice found herself gathered up close to her mother's shoulder.

"That's a nice boy, Mother. He says he is all Italian. Mercy!" she suddenly sat erect, "they might call him a 'Dago' at home. Wouldn't that be awful!"

"I guess the Irish half of him would settle them if they did," chuckled Jack from his corner.

"And Mother, he didn't think it was much of a story, and it was all about an ancestress that was with Queen Marie Antoinette, when she played dairymaid at Versailles."

"And, Mother, he didn't seem to think any more talking about it than I should talking about our great-grandmother Kemp."

"But why should he, dear, after all?"

"Why, I don't know."

The young voices trailed off drowsily, and little heads nodded in time to the steady padding of the horses' hoofs on the smooth Roman streets.

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CHAPTER XVI

GOOD-BY TO ROME

Signor Marello reported for duty one evening at the Kenyon apartment, immediately after Easter. His mother had consented to his absence for several weeks, and his brother could take charge of such pupils as he had in Palermo. In making final arrangements with Mr. Carter he had asked quite frankly to be given an allowance for board, lodging and railway expenses, saying that he could manage those things most economically, that he should prefer not to be an hourly, and daily charge upon their purse or their time. The sum that he mentioned as covering these essentials was so moderate that Mr. Carter agreed to it only under the promise that he should be told if, by any chance, it failed to cover all for which it was intended.

The children were at first a little shy of this new element which was introduced into their every-day life, and the twins complained bitterly at being, as they said, "put back to books again, just as they were having such a good time."

Signor Marello, however, had no such intention, saying that when so much of history was spread out at their feet, it would be a thousand pities to shut themselves up with books. So their daily lesson

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took the form of strolls about Rome, sometimes in company with Mademoiselle, sometimes alone. Many a sunny stone bench in the Villa Borghese Gardens, and many a tram that ran out into the suburbs came to know the group of foreign children that gathered round a tall slender gentleman with fair hair, and clear brown eyes. If anyone stopped to listen to the talk, he heard a curious medley of Italian and English, an even more curious medley of facts, for the talk wandered from Roman history, in the early days of the Republic, to the latest accomplishment of the aviators, who were breaking records in all parts of Europe.

One long afternoon they spent upon the Palatine tracing out the confines of the city of Romulus, the Roma Quadrata, whose tufa walls have only recently come into their full measure of respect as authentic relics, and studying the House of Livia, where their most distinct impression was the delightful idea that, in the old days, plumbers were in the habit of putting their names and addresses on their water pipes.

Alice said that to stand on the northern side of the Palatine and look down over the Forum, was to see "almost more history than she could bear, all at once," and she smiled gratefully at Signor Marello when he led her eyes away from the ruins at their feet, to study the dark clouds that were bringing a shower across the southern hills. So fascinated did they become in the cloud shadows chasing one another over the close-packed houses of

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Rome, that they quite forgot that rain might come and find them quite at its mercy. When the storm turned toward them, with the sudden viciousness peculiar to southern showers, Signor Marello seized a twin with each hand, and calling to the older children to follow, fled through the ruins with the quickness and decision of a man who knew his way. At last, he plunged down a narrow stairway, in a hole in the ground, and they found themselves in safe, if somewhat damp, shelter.

"Where are we, please?" asked Jack when he had recovered his breath.

"In what they call the 'Republican Houses.'"

"Where are the Democratic Houses?" demanded Robert, whose mind found itself suddenly entangled in American politics.

"These were of the old Roman Republic, I am afraid, and know nothing of the kind of political rivals you suggest," answered Signor Marello, laughing. "You see the Palatine was originally shaped like the island of Capri, with a 'saddle' between the two heights. When the Emperor Augustus wanted to have the whole hill one fine level for his new palace, he simply had the valley in the middle filled in, and these houses happened to be covered over and forgotten. Later, when they were rediscovered, people who knew decided that they were of the time of the Republic, so the Emperor's offhand way of laying a foundation has saved us a bit of old Rome."

Alice, after her usual fashion of wanting to ex-

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plore every odd nook and corner, had been examining the different rooms. "It is built on the same plan as the houses in Pompeii, only being covered in makes it look different and funny."

The shower was quickly over, and they returned to the surface to find fitful gleams of sunshine slanting across the ruins of the palaces of the Cæsars, and touching lightly the great mass of the Coliseum.

"After all, out-of-doors is the nicest thing, isn't it?" said Kate. "At least, when we can stay on the top of out-of-doors."

Unfortunately three days of real rain made Kate's beloved out-of-doors an impossibility, and Signor Marello took his charges through certain galleries of sculpture, showed them one or two world-famous pictures, and tried to bring home to them the fact that these things were something besides mere collections of art and "oldness," as Robert called them. In time they came to feel that the long lines of marble busts in the Vatican Museum were really portraits, that the originals had actually walked about the streets of Rome, in the days that Signor Marello was trying to make alive to them.

As the time for leaving Rome drew near, a kind of homesickness overtook the entire family, and even Kate and Robert were caught gazing wide-eyed out of their bedroom window, wondering plaintively if they would ever see the garden of the Chinese Embassy, and the dear little Chinese baby again. Philomena was genuinely sad to have them go, but a contented smile lurked behind her tears,

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for cheery letters had come from Miss Kenyon saying that Capri had done Miss Lulu a world of good, and that the two ladies would be at home again a few days after the Carters had gone.

"There are a few things I want to do before leaving," said Mrs. Carter at luncheon one day to Signor Marello, who had been persuaded, with much difficulty, to accept her invitation to that meal. "I want to have the children see the Sistine Chapel with you, and I want to see it again myself. And then, I want to drive out along the Appian Way, and I want to drop my penny into the Trevi Fountain, so that I shall have neglected no precaution, and may be sure of seeing Rome again."

Signor Marello gladly promised to see that this program was carried out to the letter, and the following morning saw them all in the Sistine Chapel. While the children were ready to be respectful to the pictures, they found it hard not to laugh at the devoted students who were walking about, studying the ceiling by means of little looking-glasses, which they held in front of themselves, like teatrays. Robert was filled with a wild desire to stand innocently in front of one of these absorbed women, willing to endure the inevitable bump for the sake of seeing her stumble. Fortunately his plots were foiled by watchful elders.

To Alice and Jack, it was possible to give some explanations of the lovely faded frescoes along the walls that would fix them in their minds for all time. Even the ceiling could be made to mean much to

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them, but their mother wisely discouraged the attempt to study the vast Last Judgment, feeling that they would be better without any lasting impressions of its seething crowds.

"I feel as if that were a duty performed," she said in an undertone to Signor Marello, as they left the Piazza of Saint Peter's. She knew that the Sistine Chapel would be a memory for them all, one of those things that come back to the mind, as the mind grows old enough to welcome its return, and she entered fully and freely into the celebration of the last solemn ceremony at the Fountain of Trevi, with as much faith and enthusiasm as any of the children.

It was a pretty sight for a casual passer-by to see: four children, and two grown people standing in line, and tossing each a penny into the great stone basin. If the tiny street urchin, who was lurking round the corner, was going to fish every penny out, as soon as their backs were turned, well and good. They had done their share toward propitiating the Water God, and they could leave Rome with the happy belief that some day would see their return.

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CHAPTER XVII

PERUGIA

"Isn't it good there are so many of us, and we can have a railway carriage all to ourselves!" said Alice.

The bustle of departure from Rome was over. Signor Marello had stowed the hand luggage carefully away on the overhead racks, and had withdrawn to his own compartment. All but the absolutely essential trunks had been sent on, by express, to await them in Florence, and the family was free to take its round-about journey to Perugia. The train circled Rome, as if it were trying to say a courtly good-by, and crossed the Campagna, to follow the Tiber northward, along the base of the Sabine Mountains. Perched high up among the hillsides, first one little town and then another greeted the children as they passed, and only constant running from one window to the other could keep them fully informed of the wonders of the view.

"What made folks go and build on the tops of things, like that?" was Robert's bewildered question.

"You see, they liked to be where they could see all the surrounding country. They were never sure

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whether it was a friend or a foe that was coming, but they felt sure it would be wiser to take no chances. With their town up on a hill like that, they could see everything for miles around, and the hills formed their natural fortress."

"Nobody is going to hurt them now, Father, why don't they come down where they can be comfortable?"

"Perhaps," interrupted his mother, "they are more comfortable where they are. You would not like it if some of the Chinese came over to Texas, and told you to live in a boat on the river, just because they live that way at home, now would you?"

This was a new idea, and Robert looked rather crestfallen. He loved his own new ideas, as every bright child should, but he had not yet learned to see more than his own side of a question. He looked at the hill towns in the beautiful valley of the Nera, which they were entering, with new respect.

"There are a good many reasons for their building on the heights, besides reasons of war, Son," explained his father, "reasons of health, and sanitation, as well as of beauty. From the very earliest records, these people have always loved the beauty of sea and sky, and the rich valleys like this one."

"There are two towns in front of us, Father, and one looks as if it had a castle on its walls," cried Jack, as the train was drawing out from the station in Foligno. "Please come and look!" They all crowded to Jack's window at once.

"The larger town must be Perugia," said Mr.

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Carter. "It is a place of a good deal of importance, in these modern days, and the Capital of the Province of Umbria. You remember, don't you, Alice, the lady at the exhibition of peasants' work in Rome who showed the embroideries and laces from Umbria?"

"By and by you will know Umbria as the home of one of the old schools of painting. Perugia gave her name to one of its greatest painters."

"Oh, I know," exclaimed Kate, answering her mother, "he painted some of the pale pictures in the Sistine Chapel, and his saints have round, flat faces and crinkly hair. But I can't say his name," with a note of disappointment in her voice.

"Perugino, dear. You won't forget it after you have learned to love his town. Here we are now."

To Robert's delight, the first thing they saw, when they came out of the station, was a wholly modern trolley. The idea of perching a town up on a high hill, and providing no comfortable way of getting to it, seemed to him most foolish. "Please let us go up in that," he pleaded, "it will be so much quicker than carriages."

"My son, you are altogether too modern in your tastes, but there is no reason that you should not go that way, if Mademoiselle will be good enough to go with you. You had better go on to the end of the line, by the Cathedral, and then walk back. Your Father and I will meet you somewhere in the main street."

"Oh, we are going to get there, long before you

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do," called Robert, as he climbed up on the car's high step. He settled back in his corner, with a contented sigh, but he little knew the delays that attend any public conveyance in Italy. People got in slowly, settling down as if for the afternoon. Then more people got in. An official of some sort came in one door, and went out the other. Robert fumed as he watched his family drive off in the station cabs. Meanwhile the conductor leaned against the rail of his platform, taking no notice of anybody.

"Quanto tempo!" sighed a pretty woman opposite.

At last a great ringing of signals, followed by another wait. A little peasant girl, with a big market-basket on her arm, had still to climb aboard. When they actually started, they went at very good speed, "almost like they do at home," Robert said, and they took the curving road up the side of the hill with an ease, good to see and feel. But here was another stop, unexplainable in Robert's eyes. A gold-laced officer came aboard, questioned everybody, and finally fastened his attention upon the peasant girl's basket. Packages were unfolded, a bright roll of butter displayed, and several coppers handed to the official, before the car could go on its way.

"What does that mean?" asked Robert, turning to Mademoiselle, quite forgetting in his interest that they were being delayed again.

"It must be the Octroi, I don't know its Italian name. It is a tax that every town puts upon food

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that is brought in. We have it in France, you know. Just as if you had a separate customs house for Washington, and each of your inland towns."

"Whew!" exclaimed Robert, "I had rather get it all through at once."

"Everybody doesn't need to bring in food, you know."

"But everybody has to wait while the trolley stops. The folks will be there long before we are."

Indeed, the family had already settled their belongings in the old hotel on the walls, and was free to wander along the main street to meet the one member, who had been so anxious to outstrip them all.

Perugia is a brown town, golden brown in the sunlight, but always brown. The Cathedral, the great, grim Town Hall, with its wide entrance steps and its records of war and feud, even the buildings on either side of the ordinary streets, are brown.

"We moderns, with our dull, colorless clothes, offer no relief to the picture," said Mrs. Carter. "Let us see if we can not find some of the old people who belonged here, in the pictures, if we can not find them any other way." She led the way to the little Chamber of Commerce, where Perugino's frescoes glow dimly through the shadows.

"But, Mother," objected Alice, "these are saints and prophets, they couldn't have been walking round the streets of Perugia."

"Wait a moment, dear. Look at Perugino's square, stolid face, there in the portrait on the pillar.

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Can you imagine him painting anything except what he saw? He meant his people for saints and prophets, as you say, but he gave them the faces, and often the garments, of the men and women he saw in the streets of his chosen town. If he wanted to paint a Saint Michael, he gave him the armor of one of the Baglioni, or of some other young noble of the day. Would not you like to see these brown streets filled with such brilliant, graceful creatures as these?"

"You would never know, here, that you were on the top of a hill, would you, Robert?" asked Jack, as they came once more out into the street, that seemed strangely bright in contrast with the rooms they had left.

"There must be an edge to the town somewhere, for we saw it from the train. Suppose we simply wander about this first afternoon?" Mr. Carter led the way, as he spoke, up past the Cathedral, toward the northern walls of the town. As it happened, no deliberate choice could have been more fortunate, for they found a bit of high, dusty terrace, with a stone bench or two, that gave them a view they would never forget.

They were on the top of the old walls, and, although there were spurs of the town to their right and their left, directly in front there was only the valley and the wooded hills to the north, stretching to an horizon as empty and lonely as the horizon at sea.

"What has become of the rest of Italy?" asked

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Mrs. Carter. "I feel as if Perugia were the only town in the country."

"Now do you wonder that they thought any stranger might be an enemy, Robert? You can imagine some citizen watching an armed band coming down that valley, with a glint of sunshine on the armor, and wondering whether peace or war was coming with it."

"What a place for 'The White Company' or some such troop. Would not they do to fit into your picture, Father?"

"Capitally, or a company of brown-clad monks, or the black and white brethren of the Dominicans —'The Dogs of the Master' as they were called: or Pilgrims, passing down to Rome."

"Didn't women ever travel about, and cross valleys, Father?" asked Alice, jealous for her sex, in a world that seemed to shut it out entirely.

"Of course they did. They always went under escort, and either on horseback, or in a litter, a sort of enlarged, and beautified edition of the thing you rode in in Pompeii. You must read your 'Quentin Durward,' if you want a thrilling story of a woman's journey in those days."

"Why, I thought 'Quentin Durward' was a school book," said Kate.

"It is a pity to have a good book get a bad name just because you have to study it," laughed her mother. "What have you and Mademoiselle discovered, Robert?" for they had strayed from the family group.

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"A steep street, that pitches down hill, and an old, old wall that is high and dark and thick, and different from the rest."

"Well, well, that sounds worth going to see," and they willingly followed the explorers. Robert's description was found to be excellent. The wall was quite different from the rest, as well it might be, since its foundations are Etruscan, and its upper reaches Roman. As the Carters stood in front of the great, forbidding "Arch of Augustus," Kate teased to be allowed to go back that way. She felt sure it was capable of leading to something like "Aladdin" or "The Forty Thieves." Her faith in such possibilities only grew the stronger, when they found the steep stairs, and the frowning walls and arches of the Appian Way before them.

"What a scene for sword-play," exclaimed Mr. Carter, as their modern, commonplace little family group climbed steadily upward. The afternoon was closing in, and scant light fell between the narrow walls. The people they passed were ordinary enough, townsmen going quietly about their business, peasants, with market-baskets, and an occasional tourist like themselves. Yet the idea that Kate's fairy story might come true at any moment, took fast hold upon them, everything seemed so ready for it, if only such entirely modern people had not, in some mysterious fashion, got possession of this enchanted city.

A sharp shower caught them, as they came around the eastern end of the Cathedral, turning the brown

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pavements into wonderful mirrors, and the exquisite bronze fountain in the Piazza into a thing of shining beauty.

"We like this," chorused the twins, seizing their mother's hands. "Can not we stay here a long time?"

It was their father who answered: "Only a few days, my dears. These are holiday towns that come in between the work places. We must get on to Florence, before I forget how to work altogether."

"This is Friday," said Mrs. Carter, "surely, we can stay over until Monday?"

"Certainly. Besides there is one thing I want to see here that I can truly call work, though it is not my specialty. That is an Agricultural College I promised to visit for Peterson's sake, so I can report to him."

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CHAPTER XVIII

MARKET DAY

Early on Saturday morning, almost before light, the children were wakened by plaintive cries under their window. They seemed to come from a distance, grow stronger, and then die away. "Ma, ma, ma," they cried.

"What is it?" asked Kate, jumping from her bed, and running to the nearest window.

Mrs. Carter, hearing her from the adjoining room, slipped into her wrapper, and came to spread its warm folds about her little daughter. Their window overlooked a small piazza, a curious uneven little space, roughly paved, that seemed quite shut in save for a narrow road which came up, by way of a flight of steps, through one archway, and disappeared by way of another archway in the distance.

Kate snuggled under her mother's arm, and Robert came to tuck himself beneath the other fold of Mrs. Carter's dressing gown. And all the time, the plaintive chorus of "Ma, ma, ma!" went on.

"Look, oh, look!" cried Kate.

Plodding up the steps, through the dark archway, came a wise old donkey, shaking his gray head from side to side as he climbed. Behind him came an-

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other solemn gray head, and yet another, and the chorus of "Ma, ma, ma" grew louder and louder. There seemed to be no driver, but the donkeys knew their way perfectly. As the leader came into full view, Robert gave a shout of amusement. Each pannier was filled, absolutely filled, with tiny kids, only their little heads showing above the pannier brim, and each mouth was wide open. No wonder the cries of "Ma, ma, ma" had penetrated even the dreams of a healthy, tired child.

The procession seemed endless, eight donkeys, each more stolid than the last, came up the dark stair, and marched solemnly across the piazza, before the peasant driver, with his bright red cap appeared. Each pannier added its contribution to the plaintive, wailing chorus, the only other sound being the sharp click of the donkeys' shoes against the rough stones.

"They must be going to the market," said Mrs. Carter. "We will find it after breakfast, if that is not too late an hour in this early rising town."

"Oh, dear, are they going to be eaten?" wailed Kate, very much inclined to add her voice to that of the kids.

"They do not know it, dear, there is that comfort for you."

Later in the morning, the entire family, reinforced by Signor Marello, gathered in the market, which was held in the great open piazza. Huge baskets of green vegetables made patches of brilliant color everywhere, relieving the somber brown

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of the old buildings. Peasant women, in their bright head-dresses, urged their wares upon the passer-by, and, from all sides rose the clamor of live things, kids, poultry, and even an occasional little pig, exceedingly annoyed that a prospective purchaser should poke him, untenderly, in the ribs.

"There is no curse of cold storage in this country, evidently," said Mr. Carter.

"For my part," said his wife, "I shall never understand what there is in the soil of Italy to make the ordinary cauliflower grow to be pink, and purple, and all the colors of the rainbow."

"Here is something new, Mother," said Jack, pointing out a curious vegetable, which, as he said, started to be celery, and blossomed out into spinach at the top.

Naturally, they turned to Signor Marello for explanation.

"That is finochio," he said, "what you call fennel, I think, only you do not cultivate it as we do. It has to be banked up, like celery, to be good to eat. Many an Italian workman will make his midday meal off a root of that, eaten raw, and a crust of bread, with a drink of the cheap red wine of the country, which is almost as raw, to our taste, as the finochio itself."

"Do they eat nothing more solid than that," asked Mrs. Carter with something like dismay.

"A dish of macaroni, perhaps once a day, if they are well-to-do. The poultry and the kids are for the foreigner, and the wealthy." He smiled gently

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A Peasant Girl and Child

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at the childrens' expression of horror. "They are seldom really starved. The macaroni, and the flour and water things that we call 'pasta,' are very filling."

From the market, they strolled through the busy streets, gazing in at shop windows, or giving place to purchasers returning from market, their Sunday chicken or kid, still alive, under their arms.

"The Agricultural Institute that I want to see, is in the old Benedictine Monastery of San Pietro de'-Cassinensi. Do the rest of you want to go?" asked Mr. Carter.

"If it is far, we must get heavier wraps," said his wife. "I had no idea that it could be so cold in Italy in April."

"We are high up, and in the draft of many valleys."

Additional wraps proved most comfortable, for their walk took them out through the southern spur of the town that lay along the top of a high hill, and the wind had free play.

Like many another monastery in Italy, this of San Pietro has been given over to educational purposes. The Carters found its wide, bare, whitewashed spaces filled with glass cases of agricultural specimens, and its long corridors given over to collections of modern implements, and models of historic tools. To his delight, Jack found the name of many an American firm on the plows, and the reapers and binders, that shone, bright and unused against the monastery wall. Mr. Carter was

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greatly interested in a plow that was little more than a bent stick, and was anxious to know at just what period of the world's history it had been used.

"Indeed, it is in use in my Island at the present time," said Signor Marello. "And in some parts of the mainland, as well, is it not?" turning to the intelligent young guardian of the museum.

"Ah, yes. It is to help the people away from such limitations that we are here. It is not easy, but the younger generations gather to us, and good work is being done."

He led them through room after room, showing them the results of the experiments of the past few years, in improving the quality, and the quantity per acre, of the Italian rice and wheat and maize.

"Why, it is only our yellow corn meal!" cried Alice.

"It is a very important part of our diet," answered their guide, smiling, and he showed them the improvement in the corn, since the Institute had been at work, from the stunted growth, of the peasant's careless garden, to the splendid specimens grown with care, in properly prepared ground.

As they left the Institute, the porter at the gate, an old Benedictine monk, begged them to visit the church of his order, once the church of his Monastery, if only for the sake of the view from one of its windows.

There was much more that was beautiful in that church, but the view lived longest in their memories, as the old monk knew it would. They had been ab-

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sorbed in the study of the dark walnut panels of the choir stalls, and for the moment, the question of the view had slipped from everyone's mind, when the old Sacristan folded back two of the panels, and behold, they were looking out across the valley, toward Assisi, pale gold against a mass of storm cloud.

"It will come quickly, the storm, with this wind, and we are safely sheltered here. We may wait, and watch it?" asked Signor Marello, turning to the Sacristan.

"Of a surety, Signor," was the courteous reply.

The clouds did not keep them waiting long. With a savage whirl they blotted out Assisi, and swept across the valley, hiding the Tiber, its mate the Chiaggio, and the old bridge, from their sight. The wind whistled viciously, and the storm was upon them, but as they drew back instinctively from the expected rain, a vast curtain of white blew past the window.

"Why!" cried Alice, with a gasp of astonishment, "it is snow."

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CHAPTER XIX

SAINT MARY OF THE ANGELS

The April snow storm left Perguia bitter cold, with a windless cold that seemed impossible under the clear, blue sky. The carriage was ordered for the drive to Assisi, but Mr. and Mrs. Carter looked dubiously at each other, wondering if the better part of wisdom did not lie in keeping close to the bright wood-fire of their sitting-room.

"Luckily, we listened to Signora Bianchi, and kept our heavy wraps, even if it were April."

"Mademoiselle and the twins can stay here, if you are afraid of their taking cold."

Whereupon, such a clamor arose from the twins, who dearly loved a drive, that peace was restored only when the whole family was on its way to the sister hill town that beckons across the valley to Perugia. Mademoiselle, only, had begged to be allowed to remain quietly at the hotel, since a day of idleness was a luxury for her, and she dreaded the cold as a cat dreads the wet.

"I like this," said Robert, as they settled into the one big carriage, "for now we can all hear Father and Mother talk." Whereupon he and Kate proceeded to chatter, to the exclusion of everyone else.

There was plenty to talk about, for the road swept

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gaily down the hill, turning and twisting that it might reach the plain in safety. Robert's tram, that had so delighted him before he had learned its powers of standing still, was again waiting stolidly outside the station. Their driver invited them to stop at the Etruscan Tombs, but Mr. Carter declined, saying that Mediæval and Roman history must be their limit; if they ventured behind them, they might be lost entirely.

"Now, children, stop your chatter, and listen to me," he said. "Who knows just why we are going to Assisi?"

Answers came in plenty: because it was pretty; because it was another hill town; because it was a nice all-day drive, and so on. Alice suspected something behind her father's question.

"There must be some history about it," she said.

To her surprise, her father asked what seemed a most irrelevant question: "Who remembers the year in which Columbus discovered America? Perhaps we can establish some relationship with Assisi."

"1492," came promptly from both Jack and Alice, with the surprised and injured air of one wrongly suspected of not having known such an important date.

"Of course. Well, just three hundred and ten years before that, a little boy was born to wealthy parents in this town of Assisi. He grew up to be careless and happy, like the other youths of his kind, and like them, he went out to fight one day against the people of Perugia. He was taken prisoner, and

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fell ill in captivity. That gave him time to think, and when he was well again, he went out into the world preaching kindness, and poverty, and the simple doing of good. His name was Francis, and he founded the Order of Franciscans, that grew so great that it spread all over the Christian world. His followers were vowed to poverty and good works. You will learn to know them in the old pictures by their long, brown cloaks, and their gentle faces. This big church, that we are coming to in the plain, is built on the site of Saint Francis' first oratory. Hullo, something is going on. Ask the driver, Jack, you are nearest him."

"He says that it is the Festa of Saint Mary of the Angels, that everybody comes to it from miles around."

"I should think they did. We shall have to leave the carriage here. Now be careful, all of you, we must not get separated in this crowd."

The great Piazza, in front of the church, was crowded with peasants in their gay costumes. Booths were built on every side, and an endless procession of people moved among them, buying flowers or votive offerings for the altars within the church, or sweetmeats and ribbons for their women folk. Some, more devoted to mere creature comforts, were buying slices of the whole roast pigs that turned on wooden spits. The yellow bean, the inevitable "lupin" dear to Italians wherever they may be, was festooned in all directions.

After the noise and bright sunshine of the Festa,

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the church seemed dark and cool, even though it was as crowded as the Piazza itself.

"We should have brought Mademoiselle or Signor Marello," whispered Mrs. Carter to her husband. "We shall surely lose some of these children in this crush."

They were being swept toward the low, brown building under the dome of the huge church. This was the first tiny oratory of Saint Francis. It looked very small and bare in contrast with the glittering spaces about it, where many altars had been raised in memory of the wise, gentle founder of the Order. Both doors of the little oratory stood wide open, and reverently the crowd passed through, young and old bowing to the memory of one good man, whose story is dear to Protestant and Catholic alike.

After the crowded "cradle of the Order," as the Franciscans call the oratory, it was a relief to the Carters to get a breath of outdoor air, in the tiny garden, where Saint Francis' thornless roses still grow.

"He was one of the first to love the plants and flowers," said Mrs. Carter. "One of the first to call the beasts of the fields his brothers, and to preach friendly sermons to the birds. He lived in busy, bitter times, when Crusades were being fought, and your friend, Richard Cœur de Lion, Jack, was masquerading as a Black Knight. It is good to think of Saint Francis, sitting on a sunny hillside talking to the birds, and his 'little brother the fox.'"

"Where is Robert Junior?" she cried, missing

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the child for the first time from out their group. Robert was nowhere in sight. They searched the little garden, an easy task, as it was only a few feet square. Then back again to Saint Francis' cell, where the pallid della Robbia statue seemed to fill the place with the wistful presence of the Saint himself. "Robert was here with us," said Alice, "for he said something about the statue, I remember."

Anxiously they turned back into the body of the church, where the finding of one small boy among so many strange people, seemed a hopeless task.

"Did he say anything about the statue that you can remember, Alice? Anything that made you think he was planning something?" Mr. Carter knew well the workings of Junior's mind, and that a strong idea would carry him quite away without a thought of consequences.

"It was something funny, about wanting to see the other china dolls, out in the church."

"What? China dolls? What did the child mean?"

"Are there any other della Robbias in the church, Robert? He has not seen any before, and they may have fascinated him."

"Well, you stay here, in this sheltered corner, with the other children, and I will have a search. There is no use in our all getting lost."

Mrs. Carter looked out anxiously over the crowded church. It was a vast space in which to lose one small boy of eight. Kate was whimpering a little as she pressed her face against her mother's

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gown. Then she looked up with a wicked smile. "If Robert's having fun, I wish I had run away, too," she said.

After what seemed an interminable waiting, Jack spied his father's head among the shifting head-dresses of the peasants, and with him a Franciscan monk of magnificent build, whose shaven crown rose well above the crowd. Of Robert there was no sight, but Mr. Carter, to relieve his wife's fears, waved a cheery hand over his head. "It was not quite the thing to do in church," he said afterward, "but I could not endure that worried little face any longer, when I could help it." As the two men drew nearer, a disheveled, somewhat frightened little person, bobbed into view between them. Robert was clinging to his father, but his other hand had a friendly, confident grip on that of the big priest, as if he would say: "This is a great friend of mine."

The monk was the first to speak: "We think of trying this young man for sacrilege." His smile was good to see, though his voice was very stern.

Mrs. Carter looked up in surprise. The face bending toward her was wholly Italian, in its dark beauty, and rugged strength, but the speech was American, in accent, inflection, in everything.

"What has the child being doing?"

"I found him inside the altar rail, trying to climb up to touch the della Robbia angels, which he was calling china dolls. They were luckily quite beyond his reach, but it was just as well that I found him

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when I did, for all our people would not have understood just that way of searching after truth." The laugh was low, as befitted their surroundings, but it was deliciously rich and human.

"Really, Katherine, we shall have to restrain this young man in his passion for original research. He could not understand why the china angels were put up over that altar, and he was trying to find out for himself. I think it is time that this family should be going on to Assisi."

"You will find it very empty to-day, for all its people are down here on the plain. It is a quiet little place at best; to-day it will seem dead. I was born and reared there."

"But, surely—" began Mrs. Carter, and then hesitated.

"You see," the unasked explanation came with a twinkle of the big black eyes, "I served many years in a Franciscan Church in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. It is only recently that I have returned to Italy."

As the carriage dragged slowly on its way up the steep road toward Assisi, Robert found his voice again. "The big brown man was real good to me, but I was scared, just the same, when he first lifted me over that gold fence. Nobody's told me why they put china dolls up in church."

"We will see some more china dolls by and by in museums, where you can get nearer to them, and learn to understand them better," said his mother. "But you must never climb a gold fence in a church again, my dear, or frighten your mother by running

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away in a crowd, no matter how much you may want to find out things."

The horses, weary with the long climb, drew slowly toward the crest of the town. "Look, Mother, it is a pale yellow, and pale pink town. Mustn't the brown monks have looked fine in it."

"They are all gone now, Jack, except a few whom the Government has allowed to stay out the rest of their lives in their old home. It seems a pity to us, but no outsider can judge a country's needs. If the monks have had to go, it is good to know that many of the old monasteries have been turned into modern schools that are doing good work."

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CHAPTER XX

ASSISI

The Festa of Saint Mary of the Angels had certainly emptied Assisi and the Carters felt as if they had come upon the city of the Sleeping Beauty, so quiet were the vacant streets, so blind and unresponsive the houses. They lunched at the little inn on the walls, meeting the inevitable English speaking ladies of certain age, who seem to live at the table d'hôte of Italy. In this particular case, they were brown-clad, and gentle-eyed, and spoke pleasantly to the children when they passed the salt. They were anxious, in a friendly way, to have the strangers see the best of their adopted town, and gave detached bits of information about the shortest way to the Cathedral, and the church of Santa Chiara, and told the exact hour when the afternoon sun shone in upon the Giotto frescoes in the Lower Church.

Alice pricked up her ears at the mention of Santa Chiara, for she was glad to welcome one of her own sex into the sacred history of Assisi. As the sunshine hour for the Lower Church was still far away, they turned their faces toward the other end of the town, and climbed up to the Cathedral, stopping on their way to visit the little Chiesa Nuova, which is

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built on the site of the house in which Saint Francis was born.

From the Cathedral, they followed the unpaved roadway down to the church of Santa Chiara. In the open space in front of the church, Robert spied a familiar figure, and gave a last merry skip as he came down the hill. Signor Marello was standing with his back to them nibbling meditatively at a big roast chestnut. As he heard their gay greeting, he turned, thrusting the rest of his handful of nuts into his pocket, and faced them smilingly.

"I did not mean to intrude upon you. I walked over from Perugia, early this morning. Am I in your way?"

"Indeed, no," said Mrs. Carter, and the children gathered about him in a way which showed plainly that he had won their hearts, even while teaching them history.

"Why are you at this end of the town, when Saint Francis' Church is quite at the other end?" he asked.

"Some ladies at the inn told Alice about Santa Chiara, and she was so glad to find a saint of her own sex, that we had to come and see her church at once."

Signor Marello started to answer, then hesitated a moment, laughing under his breath. "May I stroll about with you, just as if it were an afternoon call I was making? If I begin to lecture on history, in the midst of this holiday, will you promise to stop me?"

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Safeguarded by their promise, he entered into the spirit of the day with the light-heartedness of a boy. Blessed with a gift for pantomime, he would make a great pretense of beginning to lecture the moment he spied any object of interest, only to remember himself suddenly, and walk past with averted eyes, and finger on lip. Mr. and Mrs. Carter watched him with interest, while the children hung upon every gesture and expression as if they were at a play.

At the entrance of the Lower Church, this merry character was laid aside as if it were a garment, and with all reverence Signor Marello led his pupils to the great Giotto frescoes that surround the central altar, helping them to see and understand the simplicity and direct truth of the four symbolic paintings.

The friendly brown-clad lady at the inn had been quite right; the afternoon sun shone in through the narrow windows, lighting the frescoes with its level rays. One little sunbeam, gone astray, fell across the face of Cimabue's tender Madonna, and she smiled down upon the children as Signor Marello told the story of this "father of modern painting."

"You may come closer to his work in Florence," he said, "and of course it was there that the people carried his first great picture in public parade through the streets to show how they admired it, but nowhere will you see a more exquisite face of his painting than this."

As they came from the church, they found the carriage waiting to take them back to Perugia.

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"Won't you drive back with us?" said Mr. Carter. "Jack can sit with the driver, and there will be plenty of room."

"Thank you, no. I am to spend the night here with an old friend who is an instructor in the school that now has possession of the old monastery. There is one lovely thing in Perugia that you have not yet seen. May I tell your driver to take you to it on your return?" He gave the driver a few instructions, and stood with lifted hat as they drove away.

"He is a most interesting man," said Mr. Carter, when they were beyond earshot, "and he is teaching me as much as he is the children."

The homeward drive was straight into the sunset, the dark mass of Perugia standing out against a crimson sky. At the old bridge they stopped for a moment to rest the horses, and each and all turned back for a last look at Assisi. The castle-like church and monastery reared their many storeys like the prow of a great steamer brought to anchor in the midst of the plain, the long lines of the foundations reaching down almost to the valley, the towers lifting themselves proudly toward the western sky.

"It is a vast monument to have been built in the name of poverty and loving kindness," said Mrs. Carter thoughtfully. "What is it that Signor Marello wants us to see in Perugia?"

"I think he meant the Oratory of San Bernardino, Saint Francis' follower and dearest friend. He spoke to me of it the other day as 'a jewel so ex-

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quisite and fragile that it seemed as if more than two hundred years must have passed between the rearing of that massive church-fortress at Assisi, and the building of its delicate façade.' "

A " jewel " they found it to be without question, tucked away in a little deserted piazza on the farther side of Perugia, its monastic buildings, like so many others, turned into an " Accademia." In the fading evening light, all its dainty carvings, and marbles, its terra cottas and tinted backgrounds blended into one perfect whole.

" I like the big church best," said Alice. " It belongs with the rocks, and the brown country."

In spite of the beauty of San Bernardino's Oratory, her verdict was accepted by all.

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CHAPTER XXI

FLORENCE

"If it were not for the river, and its yellowish sands, Florence would be as brown a town as Perugia." The children had rushed to the window of their sitting-room, without waiting to remove their traveling things, and were looking down on the wide sandy bed of the Arno, where the water ran in shallow streams between the high stone embankments. Across the river, the heights of San Miniato rose to their crowning church, lifting slender ranks of formal trees against the pale Tuscan sky.

"Does each town have a color, to you, Miss Alice?"

Signor Marello had been at the hotel door to greet them on their arrival, and was now helping them to settle in, a process where a command of the native tongue is of inestimable service.

"We did not notice colors, I think, until we reached Perugia. Naples had so many different colors, and Rome was not unlike other big cities we have seen, but Perugia was just brown, until it grew wet with the snow, and then it was almost purple."

"You are right about this, it is yellowish brown, except where the marble buildings of the Medician

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times give a brighter, lighter note. You will learn to love Florence, I believe." There was a note of sadness in his voice that Jack was quick to notice.

"Do you not love it, yourself, Signor Marello?" he asked.

The answer came with the Sicilian's slow smile. "Perhaps we of the south are a little jealous. We are so miserably poor. We have always been poor, as far as the people are concerned, and Florence has always been comfortable and well-to-do, a banker's city, and a merchant's city, even in those old days when, like all the rest of us, she was a fighting city."

"To-day, she is just a well-behaved, orderly city, guarding her art treasures, and welcoming the stranger that comes to see them," said Mrs. Carter who had joined the group by the window. "Signor Marello, do you think you could take these little folks for a real Italian walk, where all their questions would be asked in Italian, and answered in the same lovely language?"

"Surely, if you wish it. We shall be gone perhaps an hour, and we will walk all the railway stiffness out of our bones."

From the hotel door, they turned by instinct toward the Old Bridge, where the tiny jewelers' shops line the roadway on either side.

"Don't they care about looking at the river? They have turned their backs on it," said Kate, bewildered to find herself on a bridge, yet unable to see the water.

"For the little shops, it is more important to look

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at the roadway, and the passer-by. See how people linger at the windows and stop at the doors to ask questions about the silver things. I am afraid that is more beautiful to the jeweler than the river could be."

"See," called Robert, who had gone on ahead, "here is one place where you can see your river, Kate." They had reached the open arches in the middle of the bridge, and were looking along the embankment by which they had come.

"There is a queer gallery going from the end of the bridge along the river side. What is that, Signor Marello?" Jack's question halted as he searched his brain for the necessary Italian words, but he succeeded in making himself understood.

"It is just what you called it, a long gallery, connecting the two great Picture Galleries of Florence. They were once royal palaces; indeed, one is still. These two buildings were joined on the occasion of the marriage of a Grand Duke, that the wedding procession might come from the palace on the other side of the river, to the Old Palace of the People on this side."

"Can we go through it, sometime?" asked Alice, who liked the idea of walking in the footsteps of Grand Dukes.

"Certainly, but it is a long, dreary walk between rows of old pictures that have overflowed from the big galleries. Let us keep to the pictures that are out of doors to-day, while the afternoon light is so beautiful. See, there are the Royal Gardens of the

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Boboli, terraced up on the hill towards San Miniato. We will go there some day, and look back on the Florence that we are seeing now. For the present, we will go back into the town, and see if we can find our way to those towers that we can see from here."

The tallest tower proved to belong to the Palazzo Vecchio, once the seat of the Government of the Republic, later the residence of the ruling Medici, and now the Town Hall.

"There is another fountain in the court, here, that is almost as charming as your 'little man' of Pompeii," said Signor Marello, turning to Kate and Robert. They agreed to accept the bronze boy, who was struggling to hold his big bronze fish as he ran, as a good friend, but they felt convinced that he could never take the place of their merry, dancing favorite.'

The larger bronzes in the Loggia bewildered them a little, and Alice found courage, and Italian enough, to say: "If you don't mind, Signor Marello, may we please go home now. I am walking a new kind of tired into my bones, now that the railroad tired is gone. Can not we take a cab, and you tell us some more about Florence and her Grand Dukes, as we go?"

"We can even make a little 'giro' and see the Cathedral on our way," answered Signor Marello, "it will not fatigue you any more, and it will give you one more exquisite picture to take home with you, and dream over."

Both Alice and Jack were interested in the Cathe-

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Ponte Vecchio—Florence

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dral and its separate campanile. It was the first example of the kind that they had seen. "What made them put the bell tower away from the church, like that?" asked Alice, and Jack's question went further still. "What makes the Italian churches so different from the French ones?"

Signor Marello threw up his hands with the helpless gesture of a man defeated at "morra," and there is no gesture in pantomime more despairing. "It is not that your questions are so difficult of answer, but they are so far-reaching."

"But they are different, the churches, are they not?" asked Kate, coming to the defense of her big sister.

"They surely are, little lady, and so are the nations, and the climates and everything that goes to make the history and architecture of the two countries. Our buildings are the children of Greece and Rome, and porticos and huge pillars, and wide wall spaces for decoration, are natural to them. We love bronze doors, and all these delicate carved pictures, like these on the Campanile; while your French friends love big carved figures that stand well out from the walls. After all," drawing a sigh, and half-forgetting the children, "if everybody liked the same thing, it would be a dull world!"

As he made his formal adieux for the afternoon, on returning the children to their mother's care, Signor Marello suggested that if the morning should be fine they might take their regular lesson in Italian history out in the Boboli Gardens, where the fresh

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air and sunshine would add a flavor to the stories of other days.

The morning proved to be exceptionally fine, and on that day and on many succeeding days, the children and Signor Marello spent long hours in one particular corner of the Boboli Gardens, studying Florentine history at first hand. Signor Marello had a happy faculty of making history seem real and present. With his walking stick, he could give the children hasty sketches, in the gravel walks, of men and things, maps and outlines of battles. Sometimes a sudden recollection of certain portraits in the galleries would send all five of them racing across the river to the Uffizi, to seek out some stern-featured Florentine, whose iron face made whole stories, that had seemed unexplainable before, come true in a moment.

In time, the picture galleries came to be familiar ground to them and even Robert forgot his dread of the apparently endless rooms, in some special pursuit of one man's face. Kate electrified her father one bright morning, by pointing out, most accurately, the entire Medici family among the attendants in Botticelli's Adoration of the Magi.

That particular picture had been an object of pilgrimage to the children, on the morning when they had first met the Medici as a family. "How did they manage to get control of the Republic?" Jack had asked, and by way of answer, Signor Marello had taken them all to see the portrait of Cosimo the Elder, "the Father of his Country," as he is

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called in the catalogues, to the great indignation of Kate, who considered that phrase as sacred to George Washington.

"It was never a Republic as we understand that word nowadays, Jack. The Government was in the hands of a few great families. There was no voting of the people as we do it to-day. After all, it was not such a long step from the heads of several families, banded together, to the head of one powerful family seizing the entire control. We meet the same story in the other so-called free and independent cities of Italy. That is the way many of the noble families of modern Italy had their origin. You remember, two of the daughters of the 'Banker Nobles,' as they called the Medici, married Kings of France."

Although their history and walks took them not only to the picture galleries, but to many a church and chapel, they loved best the one familiar corner of the Boboli Gardens, which had become so entirely their own that they were indignant to find it invaded, one morning, by a little girl of about seven years, who withdrew rather sulkily on their approach, dragging her stolid Italian maid after her.

The morning lesson was too absorbing for delay, and the four children gathered close about Signor Marello, listening eagerly to the story of the two famous monks of San Marco, Fra Angelico, the painter, and Savonarola, the reformer.

Suddenly, from behind the hedge near-by, sprang an indignant little figure, trembling with excitement:

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"Say it in English, say it in English," she cried, stamping her foot. "I know you can, for I have sneaked and listened, and heard you use it. I hate Italian, and everything Italian. I hate it, I hate it!" and she sank on the gravel, a forlorn little bunch of misery and temper.

"Speak to her, Miss Alice," said Signor Marello gently, "she is homesick for the sound of her native tongue. I have been in the same case, and I know how it feels." He turned aside to talk, in an undertone with the Italian maid, while Alice and Jack gathered their stormy little visitor up in their friendly arms, and comforted her. She was a pretty child with big, soft brown eyes, and masses of dull red hair, but her tiny pink and white face was full of rebellion, that refused to soften even at the bidding of the four kindly faces about her, and the brown eyes were full of hot tears.

"They send me out into these horrid gardens every morning, with that," pointing to the stolid maid, "to learn Italian. But she is dull, dull, dull! I believe she would be dull, even if she spoke English. I could not learn anything from her, even if she would talk, but she won't. She just stalks along, till I want to pinch her, only she is too big and solid."

The children looked on in amazement at this tirade, and Kate, with unconscious directness, touched the root of the tragedy by her simple question: "You haven't any brothers or sisters, have you?"

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Singing Boy in Streets—Florence

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"No, I am all alone, except for that," with bitter emphasis, "and grown folks."

Signor Marello quietly rejoined the little group by the long stone bench, and took up again the story of the monks. This time, however, he told it in English, with here and there an Italian word, so artfully introduced that the latest recruit to the class could take no offense.

From history they drifted easily to fairy tales, since the two are closely related, and from fairy tales to games. The last half-hour of the morning session was given over to hide-and-seek and blind-man's buff, Signor Marello acting as umpire, and the stolid maid looking on with amazement at the sight of her sulky, silent little mistress leading in all sorts of madness, her hair flying, her pretty face pink with excitement, her clear laugh ringing out above all the rest.

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CHAPTER XXII

CARYL

Alice was the first to reach their mother with the startling news, and Mrs. Carter dropped her sewing in alarm as the child rushed into the room.

"Mother, we have lost Kate, and we don't know whether she went herself, or is stolen. Signor Marello says he thinks he can find her, and Robert is with him because he wouldn't come home without Kate. Oh, dear, oh, dear," and Alice's head went down on her mother's knees.

"Jack, what does this mean?" Mrs. Carter looked up over Alice's tumbled brown curls into her son's pale face. "Tell me the whole story as quickly and simply as you can."

It was such a straightforward story to tell, the coming of the forlorn little stranger into their happy group. Then the stories and the games, and the good fun they were all having. Then, after one of the hiding times in the hide-and-seek, Kate and Caryl, that was the new little girl's name, simply could not be found. Signor Marello was startled and questioned the Italian maid sharply, but she was so frightened that there was no sense in her, except to confess that her little mistress scared her with her mad times. Signor Marello wouldn't leave her un-

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til she had got sense enough together to tell him where she lived, and Robert would not leave Signor Marello, so the only thing to do had been to have Alice and Jack find their way home alone.

Mrs. Carter looked from one to the other in astonishment. "It does not seem possible!" she said. "Tell me about that child again. We ought to be able to trace her in some way. Thank fortune, Kate has sense enough to know her own address. I can not imagine her being so naughty as to run away, nor can I imagine anyone taking her against her will."

"You haven't seen that poor funny little Caryl, Mother," said Jack gravely.

In the meanwhile, two American artists were eating a hasty, ill-timed lunch in a lofty loggia that looked out over the river from the Via de Bardi. The man was nibbling at a piece of dry bread, and sipping a glass of thin red wine in an absent-minded fashion, gazing longingly the while into the great white studio, where a lay figure was holding out its satin draperies in tantalizing appeal. "If you could only spare a little time from your own work, Blanche, to pose for me this afternoon, I could get along much faster," he said with a sigh.

His wife sighed, too, as she shook her head gently. Not for all the wealth and ease in the world would she remind him that her "own work," as he called it, was the main support of the family. "I can not to-day, dear, for that jewelry order must be delivered to Fiorelli this afternoon. Perhaps when

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Caryl comes in, we can spare Carona to pose for you. The child should be here now. She worries me, Richard, her tempers are so startling. I am afraid I never was meant to be an aunt, and responsible for such a wisp of a thing as Caryl. There she is, now."

There was the distinct sound of feet on the bare, wooden stair and the door of the studio burst suddenly open to admit Caryl, dragging Kate with her. "You needn't scold," she cried, "I found her, and I mean to keep her, whether she wants to stay or not. She speaks English just the way we do, and I will keep her, I will!"

"Caryl," said her uncle sharply, "where did you find that child? Let go of her hand, you will frighten her."

Kate shook her head. "I am not frightened," she said, "I am only just mad. She said it was for fun, but I did not mean to run away and now my Mother will be frightened about me." She caught her breath in a little sob and then straightened up bravely. "I would like to come and play with Caryl sometime, honest I would. Perhaps we all could, but now I want to go home, please."

A swift change came over Caryl's face, and she flung herself down on the step to the loggia, hiding her eyes with her arm. "I didn't mean to make you mad," she cried, "but I'm so lonely, and there are four of you, and I thought you could spare one, for a little time. For I am only just one alone, you see, and nobody to talk to, for I can't learn Italian,

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I just can't. I hate it and everybody that speaks it. They all look as if they were making faces at me. I hate — I—" her quick ear had caught the sound of footsteps on the stair, and she looked up, with wide, miserable eyes, to find Signor Marello standing close to her. "I don't hate them all!" she whispered with a shy little smile.

With a formal bow that acknowledged the presence of the older people in the room, he knelt beside the child, and drew her toward him. "Listen, little Caryl," he said, "I have felt just as you are feeling now. Years ago I was alone in your great country, in a big city that seemed very cold and cruel to me, and no one near spoke any Italian, and my heart was bitter and empty. I said to myself all these people who pass me every day are my enemies. I feel it though they say nothing." He took her downcast face in his two hands, and turned it up to meet his kindly smile: "And then I worked hard, and learned your language, and I found that all the people that I had misunderstood were my friends."

Turning to Mr. and Mrs. Brent, he apologized with a simple outstretching of the hands that spoke volumes. "Forgive my lack of courtesy, but when you see someone suffering as you have suffered, your first thought is to help if you can. Caryl is your daughter?"

"No," answered Mr. Brent, somewhat bewildered at this invasion of his working hours, "she is our niece, and has lately come to live with us. I am afraid we have hardly had any room in our lives

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or our house for the child." The two men were studying each other's faces with friendly curiosity, and Kate, who had always been a little distant with Signor Marello, was tugging impatiently at his hand in her eagerness to be on her way to her mother. Mrs. Brent, without a word, had crossed over to Caryl, picking up the disconsolate child and tucking her flushed tear-stained face away in the comforting shelter of her shoulder. "There, there, dear, Auntie did not understand, and she has been too busy to notice everything. We will learn our Italian together, and there will be plenty of time for English in between."

Turning to Signor Marello, she held out her hand frankly: "We thank you sincerely. Perhaps," she added, "I could go with you to apologize to this little lady's mother for the anxiety we have caused her."

"May Caryl come too? She and Robert and I can all sit on a front seat." Kate had spied her brother lurking in the shadow of the door.

"Good Heavens!" murmured poor Mr. Brent under his breath, "there is another one!" and he gave his wife a glance of appeal that she met with a friendly nod of understanding. In a very few moments, the lay figure and her absent-minded master were the sole occupants of the studio.

The drive across the river was short, and it so happened that at the instant that Jack had said, "You haven't seen that poor, funny little Caryl, Mother," the child entered the room.

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"Why, you poor little mite!" was Mrs Carter's greeting, and Caryl walked from that moment into an atmosphere of comradeship and sympathy. In the weeks that followed, there were five children instead of four, in the classes that were held in the Boboli Gardens, and Carona, released from the sore trial of attending upon Caryl, sang happily in her tiny kitchen up under the roof in the Via de Bardi, or went contentedly back and forth to market, with no little mistress to frighten her with her sudden ways.

In time, Caryl was reconciled to hearing the story of Fra Angelico in the original Italian, and on one beautiful sunny day, Signor Marello took all the children to the Monastery of San Marco, that they might see the tender; reverent frescoes that seem to fill the empty cells with a light of their own. The children tiptoed quietly through the bare corridors, gathering in an awe-stricken group at the door of the cell that had sheltered Savonarola, then turning to some pale blue Virgin of Fra Angelico.

"There were so many different kinds of monks," said Alice, thinking of Saint Francis, and his gentle following of birds and beasts and kindly brothers.

"As many kinds as there were men," answered Signor Marello. "You will see another town soon that is filled with the memory of one particular saint, that is Siena."

"I heard Father talking about Siena the other day," said Robert. "We go there next, don't we?"

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"Yes," answered Jack. "We are to drive there, if the weather is fine. Father said he wanted us to have a real driving journey, such as he and 'Mr. Painter' were talking about. Are you going to drive with us, Signor Marello?" A little ripple of laughter went round the group, for the children had built up the fairy tale that Signor Marello flew over the country, since he usually saw them off on their journeys, and was generally at their destination waiting to greet them on their arrival.

"No. But this time you will know quite how I travel, for I am going round by train, to escort Mademoiselle and the luggage."

"Father said that if it was pleasant, we should start next Thursday," said Alice.

A little choking sob interrupted her. They had all forgotten Caryl for the moment. She was digging two hard, round fists into her eyes. "You will all go away, and I know you won't come back. I just *won't* care, I'll — I'll — I tell you what I will do. I'll talk Italian with Carona, won't she be surprised?" A chuckling laugh came to take the place of tears, and Caryl was herself, her "nice, new self," as Robert called it, once more.

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CHAPTER XXIII

SIENA

Thursday morning was clear as crystal, and the children so eager to start on their driving tour that eating breakfast was almost impossible.

"I can not have anyone 'journey proud,'" said Mrs. Carter, as she insisted that Kate should eat her egg. "To be honest, though, I am as much excited as any of you."

When the carriage arrived, with its four horses, and a great cracking of whips, family discipline very nearly broke down altogether. With much stowing away of parcels in the roomy "boot," and packing away of children in the wide, old-fashioned seats, they were ready at last. Mademoiselle and Signor Marello stood at the door, laughingly bidding them good-by, and promising to be in Siena to greet them when they arrived. A final crack of the whip, and the horses started at the mad gallop that the Carters were to learn was reserved only for towns and pavements, and the admiration of crowds.

"It is good-by to the river for the present, and to the old bridge for a long time, for we shall not come back this way, children."

Again, and again, as the horses plodded slowly up the hill to the Porta Romana, the children stood

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up to look back at the town. Robert insisted that he could see Caryl's loggia, and waved a friendly handkerchief toward it. "Good-by, little Caryl," said Alice. "I wonder if she is learning to play in Italian, all alone by herself, or if she is really talking to Carona, as she said she would."

"Good-by, Caryl," called Kate. "Good-by, everybody, good-by, good-by." They all joined in the chorus, waving hands and handkerchiefs as they swept through the gate and out on to the open highroad. Then, like the wise travelers that they were growing to be, they turned their faces and their minds towards their next stopping place.

"Is Siena like Rome, or Florence, Father?"

"I have never been there, Jack. You know I am just as much of an adventurer as the rest of you in this driving journey. I can tell you what I have got from the books. It is a hill town, like Perugia, so it can not have a river like Rome or Florence. It has its walls and watch towers, and its two or three great families, just like Florence, and in the old days when the families were not fighting among themselves, they would band together, and go out and fight some foreign foe, quite frequently Florence."

"How could they be foreign foes, when they were all Italians?"

"Don't forget, Alice, that United Italy has been in existence only a little longer than I have. They were Florentines and Sienese in those days, and they were all hot-headed and quick to cross swords. Hullo, what are we stopping for?"

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The horses were whimpering with fright, and pawing the dusty road frantically, while the driver was positively talking with his long whip-lash.

"He is really signaling somebody, or something," cried Jack, "it is almost as good as wireless. Oh, I say, it is the steam tram coming, do you suppose the horses are going to bolt?"

"Sit still, all of you. There is no use being hysterical, when we have not full command of the language of the country to express our feelings. Evidently, though, there is to be no bolt," for the horses were nearly over their fright and were walking docilely toward their enemy.

"I must say that is the slowest tram I ever saw. I wish it would get past, and have it over with. Why, they have stopped. That's what the driver's signals meant, Father."

Jack was right. The horses trotted in leisurely dignity past a long steam tram, that had come to a dead stop, beside the highway, simply that the wayfaring stranger might go past in safety. The engineer, in his cab, bowed low, friendly faces smiled from the long row of little windows, and the incident was over. From a safe distance, along their way, the Carters could hear the noisy train chug-chugging its way on to Florence.

The horses settled down to a steady jog, after their excitement, and the twins, drowsy with heat and dust, snuggled down for short naps. The talk drifted back to Siena. "The town, they say, keeps alive one peculiarity of the old days even more than

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her neighbors," said Mr. Carter, "that is the old Guild system. Do either of you know just what a Guild was?"

"They were always getting themselves painted in groups in Holland," answered Alice.

"Weren't they a sort of trades' union, Father?"

"Well, not in our modern sense, Jack, and yet they were trade associations, with their rules and charges, and their aid societies. They made trade possible, and art, too, all over the mediæval world, and they linger in our day, in a good many places. In Siena, they still inhabit their special quarters, and their rivalry is great."

"What real chance have they for rivalry, when trade is so widespread as it is now? Do you mean in their love-affairs?" asked Mrs. Carter.

"No, they say that neither man nor girl is apt to go outside the 'cantrada' of their birth for a mate. But when the 'Palio' comes the excitement is tremendous, and the section that wins the pennant carries its head very high."

"The Palio?"

"It is a horse race where the jockeys ride bareback round the old Piazza. The horses are assigned to the different guilds by lot, and the race is run breakneck fashion. Mr. Brent was telling me about it, and urging me to stay until August, so that we could see it."

"August in the interior of Italy!" Mrs. Carter thought of all the dangers of such an Italian summer, as she imagined them, not knowing that some

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Street in Siena

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of her country people deliberately choose the "hill towns" as a refuge from the terrors of an American hot season.

"Oh, please, Mother, what is that place up there?" Alice's thoughts had wandered while her parents were talking of Siena, but now she was keenly interested again, pointing to a crown of towers against the western sky. "It is like a fairy book picture."

"That must be 'San Gimignano of the Beautiful Towers.' We are going there later. They say it is hardly changed since the poet Dante went there on an embassy from Florence, in the days before his own political troubles and his exile. For the present, our way lies off here to the left."

Through the sunshiny afternoon, they drove along the highway. "Dull" the guide books call it. Dusty it certainly is, but to the Carter children it was full of delights. The hedgerows, the vineyards where the vines clambered up over the basket-shaped trees, and flung themselves from one tree to another; and above all the white Tuscan oxen, with their wide-branching horns, fascinated them. Eyes that had been heavy, and heads that nodded during the heat of the day, were wide open and alert, when their driver urged his horses madly through the gate of Siena, and rushed along the stone-paved streets with a desperate clatter, as who should say: "We are of much importance, and we have come from a distance, look at us!"

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CHAPTER XXIV

SAINT CATHERINE'S TOWN

"This is the town that belongs to a woman saint, Miss Alice. You remember, when we were in the Monastery of San Marco, I said that Siena had its own sacred memory. Everywhere you will find records of Saint Catherine of Siena." Signor Marello and the two older children were standing by their sitting-room window, overlooking the valley to the west of Siena. "See the big, brown church below us there? In the street that runs down to it, Saint Catherine was born, away back in the middle of the fourteenth century. Her father was a dyer, and to this day the dyers of Siena live in that quarter."

"Was she really a saint?" asked Jack, with a curious little hesitation in his voice.

"Do you doubt that Saint Francis was a good and holy man? Would you like to have to remember Assisi without him?" Signor Marello asked gently. "You will feel the same toward Siena. Saint Catherine was a wonderful woman, and her influence was always for good in the political and personal life around her."

Mrs. Carter had joined the group by the window and was watching Jack while Signor Marello was

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speaking. From the boy's eager face she looked straight into the clear, brown eyes of his teacher. They understood her question, and answered it with a smile that seemed to say, "You can trust your children to me, dear lady."

"Where shall we go first, in this wonderful Siena, Signor Marello?" she asked. "We have come to depend on you for guidance."

"May I, indeed, play guide to you all? There are always two objects of pilgrimage in an Italian town, the Cathedral, the Palace of the Church, and the Palazzo Publico, the palace of the people. Both are exceptionally beautiful here in Siena, which would you like to see first?"

"Please may we have the Cathedral first?" asked Alice, her mind still filled with the idea of Saint Catherine.

A short walk along the busy Via Cavour and through one or two narrow winding streets, skillfully selected so that they might not look down toward the great Piazza by the Palazzo Publico, and be diverted from their first object of pilgrimage, brought them to the church of San Giovanni, once the Baptistry of the Cathedral.

"It is all black and white, like the Cathedral in Genoa!" said Robert.

"You are returning to the north, you see. Stand back here, and look up. The Cathedral is built right out over the little church; the main body of it stands on the highest point of the town."

"Those steps certainly look as if it did," laughed

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Mr. Carter. "Is there no way round for an old gentleman like me, Signor?"

"That little street to the right will serve you, and the climb will be more gradual, but you will have to climb as high," was the smiling answer. The party divided, the twins trudging away with their father, the others going slowly up the beautiful stairs, stopping every once in awhile to rest, and look back upon the crowded roofs of the towns that seemed to be falling away from their feet.

The whole family met again in front of the Cathedral, and even the twins fell silent before its stately beauty. "We have seen nothing like this," said Mrs. Carter. "Why is it that a Gothic church always looks as if it had grown, instead of having been built by man?"

Row upon row, the black and white façade, with its elaborate carvings and its Venetian mosaics, rises into the air as if there were no such thing as weight in marble. Higher still, the square campanile dominates the town.

"May we go in?" asked Jack, quietly.

The heavy leather door curtains fell softly into place behind them, and they found themselves looking down the length of the huge nave, toward the choir, dark in the distance.

"May we walk round just as we want to?" whispered Kate, who remembered Madame Bianchi's gentle reproof of the inquisitive strangers who sometimes forget that a Cathedral is a place of worship.

"There is no service being conducted now," an-

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swered Signor Marello, "we shall disturb no one, if we walk over to the lovely pulpit, and read the Bible stories that they have carved in the marble there. When these churches were built, few people could read, you know, and these marble decorations took the place of books to them. See, these are all New Testament stories. Back there, in the mosaic of the pavement — they keep most of it covered, except on great festas — are the stories of the Old Testament. In their way, these great churches did the same kind of work that your big public libraries do in America; their decorations were books as well as pictures and sculpture."

The children were very quiet as they stepped once more out into the sunshine of the Piazza; very quiet as they followed their elders down the same steps by the Baptistry, and through the narrow, winding streets to the right. Suddenly they found themselves looking into the semi-circular Piazza that is the center of the town.

"Why, it is like one of the old Roman theaters," exclaimed Mrs. Carter, "and we are up in the highest seats."

"And across there, where the stage would be, that must be the Palazzo Publico," said her husband. "It looks as if the stage were set for an historical drama."

"It is used as a theater whenever they run the Palio. The course is laid round the edge of the amphitheater, and it is a mad race while it lasts. The crowd is wonderful, but for myself, I had rather

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have this big empty space, and just the grand old palace and its tower, to look at."

"It is prettier than the towers in Florence," said Alice, "it seems lighter, somehow."

"To me, you have just expressed the difference between the two cities, Alice!" said her father. "Can not you imagine them going out to fight each other. Florence, big and solid and stolid, crashing straight ahead through everything, and Siena quick and desperately agile, attacking now from this side and now from that. It would be like the fire-wing black birds, we used to see at Grandpa's, driving the heavy, lumbering crows before them."

"The idea of a stage setting is becoming so strong to me that it seems as if there were no other side to the Palazzo," laughed Mrs. Carter; "can not we go round it, and set my mind at rest?"

"I was going to ask you to do so, if you were not all too tired, for the view is worth the walk."

Carefully they picked their way down over the rough pavement, rounding the end of the "stage," as they insisted upon calling the Palace, and coming upon the Vegetable Market in full swing.

"Pretty, pretty," exclaimed Kate, falling into the pet phrase of her babyhood, as she sometimes did, when excited. Pretty, indeed, for the wide, brown space was dotted with umbrellas of many hues, and beyond, the view dropped away over the valley that lies between the two southern ridges of the city; a valley that spread out into a smiling country of little rivers, dusty white roads, and far reaching green

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fields that rose gently to blue hills and Monte Amiata, in the distance.

"Mr. Brent is right, it is a place to spend an entire summer in," said Mrs. Carter, as they sat by their high window, drinking morning coffee on the day they were to leave Siena. "I do not want to leave it at all. These few days of glorious sunshine have been like a fairy tale or a dream."

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CHAPTER XXV

DRIVING TOUR

The succeeding days of the driving tour were like dreams and fairy tales to them all. The day-long drives through the rich green country, the little sun-baked, yellow villages that perched upon the heights, and on every side, framing the picture, the pale blue hills, rising to mountains in the distance.

From Siena's airy towers they drove to San Gimignano, grimmest of mediæval cities, arriving in the dusk of a perfect afternoon. Beyond Poggibonsi, the road had been almost all uphill, now hiding itself entirely from its objective point, now giving the Carters a full view of the fantastic towers grouped irregularly about the hilltop. The horses plodded patiently along their way, accepting a hill as a kindly gift from the Lord, and knowing full well that the cracking whip had no reference whatever to their rate of speed. Once inside the walls of the old city, they made mad haste, and plunged through the narrow gray streets, bringing up sharply at the inn door.

Apparently the entire population of San Gimignano had been waiting only for the arrival of the carriage for their social evening gathering. They crowded close about the inn door, exchanging greet-

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ings with the driver, who appeared to be an old friend. Children swarmed about the horses' feet regardless of danger and each piece of luggage, each passenger alighting, was counted and commented upon with astonishing frankness and interest.

"They, and their clothes, seem as gray as the town itself," said Mrs. Carter. "Truly, this must be a witches' stronghold, and whenever a baby prince or princess is to be christened, and the wicked fairy is omitted from the guests, I believe she orders her carriage, and drives straight out through that gate, on her way to make trouble."

They climbed up a long stone stairway, built between close crowding walls, to the rambling, spacious rooms of the inn, where they seemed to be the only guests. With her usual instinct, Alice made at once for the window. "Why!" she exclaimed, "we are on the very top of the wall, and all the rest of the world has fallen down into the valley."

"Come, everybody," Mr. Carter was calling from his room, which lay quite across the kitchen, and up a funny little flight of steps; "let us get a walk before supper, perhaps in the morning light we may make the mistake of thinking this place is real, instead of a dream."

There could be no mistake about it at that hour. They walked toward the center of the town, to find it as gray and deserted as everything else. Forbidding walls, with windows that looked lost and astray, rose up from the streets as if they were a part of

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the same rocky earth. Here and there a lofty tower, its every stone speaking of fear, retreat and defense, reared itself high in air, one or two tiny windows piercing its sides.

"I don't wonder that the later Italians built houses that were all windows," said Jack. "These things make the big, heavy palaces in Florence seem positively frisky!"

"Would you be at all surprised, children, if a lady in black velvet, and long lace ruffles, came out on the steps of the town hall, there, and sang all her secrets to the moon, as they do in the opera?"

"I like Mother's idea of the witches, best, Father," answered Kate; "just think what a lovely start one could make for a broomstick ride from one of those high towers."

"Wait a moment, Kate; did Italian witches ride broomsticks? I have a feeling that that ought to be left entirely to the Salem branch of the family. The fairy-book kind flew, I fancy, or rode an occasional bat."

"If we are to be correct and archæological about our fairy tales, this will be but a dreary world," laughed Mrs. Carter. "I vote we go back to the inn, and supper!"

They found a round table spread for them in one corner of the great dining-room, its center lighted by flickering candles. Madame, their hostess, served them a supper that, as she assured them, was the more wholly Italian because her husband, who was also the host and the cook, was a veritable art-

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ist, and a Frenchman. No other could so appreciate the beauties of Italian dishes. Of a truth, the little Frenchman had sent in a "minestra" that put all other soups to the blush, and had done things with a "fritto misto" that rendered it more of a mystery than ever, and made one hesitate to translate it into the crude equivalent of "a mixed fry."

"How they do it, I can not imagine," said Mr. Carter, as one bit of golden batter gave up its secret as white meat of chicken, and another confessed to being the heart of an artichoke.

"It must be all part of the same fairy tale, Father," said Jack.

"What is the next chapter of that tale to be?" asked Mrs. Carter as they were separating at bed time.

"Pisa, and the following chapter will be Lucca, those two enemies who hated each other so lustily, and yet could never catch a glimpse of each other around their separating mountain."

Their host lit their candles for them with a most courtly manner. "They will, unfortunately, be a necessity in the bedrooms, but for the journey thither, there is no need, for, as you see, we have *la lumière electrique,* pointing with immense pride, to the one tiny bulb swinging in the middle of the vaulted ceiling of the huge kitchen, which seemed to be the passage way to all the other rooms.

Even the bright morning sunlight failed to deaden the impression that San Gimignano had made upon them all. Looking back, as the carriage made its

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way out through the town gate, Mrs. Carter said: "I still maintain that if witches do fly in these modern days, and melodramatic heroes, with long cloaks and daggers, do strut about the world, San Gimignano is their natural home and abiding place."

Pisa spread before their eyes an entirely different page of history, and they enjoyed it and remembered it, as a cold and stately dream, standing proudly on the banks of an Arno, grown surprisingly wide and deep since it left Florence; a city of white buildings, and streets less narrow and crowded than those they had been seeing of late. Set apart, in their grassy enclosure, close to the town wall, they found the treasures of Pisa, "the fabrics" as they call them in everyday life, the Cathedral, the Baptistry, the leaning tower, and the exquisite little Campo Santo.

"They seem all a part of the same fairy tale," said Mrs. Carter. "Allfair could have lived in the tower, and let down her long hair over the parapet, where it leans toward the earth."

"And they could have been married in the Cathedral, before they ran away from the witch," cried Alice, taking up the story.

"Let us play that Allfair was a Pisan lady. Then, of course, the Prince would have to be from Lucca, as the beautiful Prince used to have a way of appearing from out of the enemy's country. Shall we let them get away to Lucca, quite safely, as we are going to do?"

"Of course they must get away safely, Father;

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how can they live happy ever after, if they don't?"

Lucca, they found, would be a delightful refuge for anyone, and they voted it worthy even of a fairy and her Prince. They left Pisa pale and aloof, and found Lucca full of life and warm color. "I think your eloping fairies made a good choice," said Mr. Carter. "Personally, I believe they flew over from Pisa, and alighted on that fine old red brick tower, with the trees growing on its top."

"They must have expected aeroplanes when they built all these towered cities in Italy, Jack," said Alice; "don't you think they would be nicer than the witches Mother and Kate are so fond of?"

They had left the horses for a much needed rest, and were spending the early evening hours strolling about the wide road that has been built on the top of the old ramparts. From that point of vantage, they could look down into the comfortable old town, "Lucca the Industrious" as they used to call it when its silks were famous. To-day, it is the capital of a province, retaining in its quiet streets, and solid old palaces, something of its former ducal calm. Church towers and palace towers, and close massed tree tops, give it an air quite different from any of its neighbors.

"Isn't it strange that towers can be so friendly here, and so forbidding in San Gimignano!" said Mrs. Carter. "I suppose it is because San Gimignano stopped short at the grimmest fighting period, and these other towns have ripened and grown richer with the progress of the years."

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One more day of driving brought them to Pistoia, where Mademoiselle and Signor Marello met them with the luggage, and modern Italy, with its tourists and its railways, caught them up again, and swept them off to Venice.

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CHAPTER XXVI

VENICE

"Oh, Signor Marello, we are so glad you have come, the men at the ferry below our window have been making such a fuss, and we don't know just what it means. One man speaks with great authority, and the rest all chatter, and then one man goes off across the canal, and the rest all laugh. What does it mean?" Alice turned from her favorite perch on the wide window sill of their sitting-room window that looked out over the Grand Canal, as Signor Marello came in for the afternoon lesson.

"The Gondoliers form a very old association, and they have many laws and rules, some their own, some enforced by the city. The ferries take the place for the gondolas that a cab-stand takes for the cabs. It is a privilege granted by the city that allows the gondolas to gather at that point. In return for this privilege the station is in honor bound to maintain the ferry. Some one gondola must be always in attendance, and the captain of the station calls each man to that duty as his turn comes. No man likes to go, for it means stripping his boat of all its cushions, and its pretty brasses, and it may mean, too, the losing of some profitable engagement. So each man, as his turn comes tries to con-

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vince the captain that he has made a terrible mistake, and is about to commit a horrible injustice. You notice that each man goes, but only after a protest that sounds as if it were all a matter of life and death."

"Beppo does not belong to a ferry, does he?" asked Kate.

"Father said he was an independent, and owned his own gondola," said Jack. "May we have him, now, Mother, and take our lesson out on the Canals?"

"Not this afternoon, my dear; your father and I are going to make a call over in the quiet, residential quarter on the other side of the Grand Canal, and I am afraid you children must put off your excursion until to-morrow."

"Perhaps you would all like to take a walk in Venice?" Signor Marello smiled as he asked the question. "I don't mean on the water. The Canals are not the only streets in Venice."

From the side door of their hotel, they followed the narrow street that ran down to the ferry, then, turning, picked their way through still narrower "calle" toward the Piazza and Saint Mark's. It was early afternoon, and the wide Piazza was empty save for a few sight-seers, and the countless pigeons. The great standards of Venice, and of Italy swung lazily from the masts in front of the Cathedral, and a peasant woman held out her hand full of corn, coaxingly begging the children to buy it that the pretty birds might be fed.

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Mademoiselle took out her little purse, and from that very moment the pigeons began to show their interest in the transaction. Alice held her hand, full of the yellow kernels, high above her head, and in a moment the birds were circling about her, perching upon her hands, her arms and shoulders, daring even to coax at a tiny grain held between her lips. They would even have followed her into the big, dark church, had she not shown them distinctly that her hands were empty.

"Oh, dear!" exclaimed Robert, with a little sigh, as he stood beneath the brilliant domed ceiling of Saint Mark's; "it is more different than anything we have seen yet."

Jack laughed. "We are always asking you why things are different, Signor Marello, but Robert is right. It seems as if this had a right to an ever so much bigger question than any of the others."

"You saw as beautiful mosaics in Rome," said Mademoiselle.

"Yes, but it was not all mosaics, as this is," answered Alice.

"Venice was Mistress of the Seas, and closely in touch with the East. She brought home from Constantinople, all this love of domed ceilings, and deep, rich color. She brought home, too, the wealth with which to build this wonderful temple, and the body of the saint who was to be its greatest relic. You will find Saint Mark in many of the Venetian pictures. This is his shrine."

"It would be hard to find any one color that

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would mean Venice, wouldn't it, Signor Marello?" asked Alice, looking round the rich interior, where reds and deep bronzes blended with gold, and the pictured mosaics of the domes crowned the whole."

"One could spend years in studying it all," said Mademoiselle.

"Many a man has done so," replied Signor Marello, gently restraining Robert and Kate, who were showing unmistakable signs of plotting to race across the fascinatingly uneven pavement. "You are in church, little people," he said.

"Where is the Palace of the People, that you told us to see in every Italian town, Signor Marello?"

"This time, it is the Palace of the Doges, Jack, here, beside the Cathedral. Venice was another of those Republics that were so different from the Republics we know. The Government was in the hands of a few men, who formed what is known as an Oligarchy. They held the balance of power between the aristocracy and the people, and elected the Doge from among their own number. The Doges, you can see, were housed very well, and lived in royal state."

Through the glorious court they wandered, and up the wide stairs, to find the Rooms of the Doge, and many a beautiful hall, decorated with symbolic paintings and frescoes. From the Hall of the Grand Council, they found their way to the balcony that overlooks the great Canal of Saint Mark's.

"This is the best picture of all," said Kate, and

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she besieged Mademoiselle and Signor Marello with questions about Saint Theodore and the Lion, on their isolated pillars, about the Island and Church of San Giorgio, and the outlying island of the Giudecca, until they begged for mercy.

"There is no means of escape, unless we run away in a steamboat," laughed Mademoiselle, "and there is one, just coming to the landing."

"We shall have to count on catching the next one," said Signor Marello, "for even in romantic Venice, we can hardly jump from the balcony of the Doge's Palace."

They took a safer method of reaching the steamer, and were fortunate enough to find seats well up in the bow where they could get an uninterrupted view of the stately panorama of the Grand Canal, as it unfolded itself. Their teacher believed in letting them have the joy of discovering things for themselves, but he pointed out the palace from which, tradition says, Desdemona fled to join her dusky hero, and he let them land at the Rialto Bridge, that they might follow, for a little, in Shylock's footsteps.

"We can walk home from here, if we study the map carefully," he said, guiding them through the tiny footways and over the high-arched bridges that beguile the true lover of Venice.

In their delight over old houses, and queer winding canals, neither the children nor their elders had been watching the sky, so that the sharp shower that descended from the heavy black clouds took them

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wholly unaware, on the crest of a steep little bridge that came down crosswise into an open place that gave no promise of shelter.

"We can not be ceremonious," said Signor Marello, as he swept the entire party into a cook shop, where the big ovens, and charcoal fire gave promise of warmth at least.

The proprietor turned from his mixing bowl, in some surprise, but motioned them, courteously enough, to a bench against the wall.

"What is he mixing?" asked Kate in a whisper, "it looks like 'hasty-pudding.'"

"It is what we call 'polenta.' It makes good eating on a wet night, I can assure you."

The proprietor, catching the sound of his native tongue, beckoned to the children to come nearer, if they liked, and watch the process of stirring the stiff, yellow mixture that forms the chief article of diet in the poorer Venetian household. He stirred and stirred until, as the old-fashioned cook books say, the mixture "stood away from the pan," and the spoon could "stand alone." Then he slipped it into the huge oven, to draw it out later, and turn it face downwards on the marble counter, there to lie steaming hot, a vast, round cake, nearly a yard in diameter.

"Watch, and see how he cuts it, when people come to buy," said Signor Marello.

On the other side of the marble counter were gathered the customers who had been waiting for the cake to come from the oven. The cutting was

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The Grand Canal—Venice

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far too serious an affair for any mere knife, and the shop man took a piece of heavy twine, slipped it under the cake, and drew the two ends together, with a mighty tug. The two halves, thus separated, he cut again and again, into sections like the pieces of pie that may have graced the table of "Jack the Giant Killer's" host. The customers wrapped their pieces in brown paper that they had brought themselves, and trotted contentedly out into the rain, which had settled into a steady downpour.

For a while the children found it amusing enough just to stand in the doorway, and watch the passers-by run across the wet paving stones, mount the bridge at a leap, and disappear in the narrow darkness of the street beyond. As the sky grew darker, Jack, who was always thoughtful of his mother, turned to Signor Marello. "Are we very far from home, Signor? Could not we get there without too much wetting?" At the same time the cook's boy, who had been greatly interested in the stranger children, whispered a question to Signor Marello, that brought an assenting nod from that gentleman.

"Con felze," he called sharply after the boy.

Alice pricked up her ears at the strange word, and asked: "What is that?"

"You will see, in a moment. Here is the boy now, he has been quick. Now, we must run." For the boy, seeing that they had caught sight of him, was signaling them to come.

With a gathering of skirts, on Mademoiselle's

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part, and a ducking of heads for everyone else, they followed the boy to find that he had summoned a gondola to the nearest canal side. An old Ganzeri, very wet and miserable, was holding the gondola against the stone coping with his hook. With his free hand, he was holding back the black curtain of the felze, that the strangers might jump at once into its sheltering blackness.

"At last," said Mademoiselle, "a Ganzeri has fairly earned his fee."

"I know they are tiresome," answered Signor Marello, "but they are old gondoliers, past other work, and it takes only a few centissimi to buy the good polenta."

The children snuggled down within the safe shelter of the felze, with little chuckles of glee. It was quite like the Middle Ages this slipping over the gray water in a long, black boat, with its black tent at one end. Peeping through the cracks between the curtains, they caught glimpses of a different Venice from any they had known: a sad Venice, losing all her pretty colors between the waters of the canals and the waters of Heaven.

"I am glad it rained, and glad that we saw the polenta shop, and had a ride 'con felze,'" called Kate over her shoulder, as she ran up the steps of their hotel landing-place.

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CHAPTER XXVII

GOOD-BY TO ITALY

The days in Venice slipped by as easily and gently as the gondolas glided over the canals, and Mr. Carter's holiday time was over before any of the family could realize that two weeks had passed, in that wonderful city of many colors.

"I can make no excuse for lingering longer," he said to his wife, "even Galveston could not be laid out on the Venetian plan, and the rest of Texas is far too dry for canals."

To the children and Signor Marello, Venice had been not so much a page of history as a wonderful story-book. They had wandered from one end to the other of its maze of little streets, visiting the quiet quarters where the stranger rarely penetrates; discovering the palace of a royal Pretender, where a scarlet cockatoo shared the landing-stage with a page boy in scarlet livery; finding their way by accident into the ivy-grown cloisters of a huge church long since given over to the baser uses of business; seeing a few of the great pictures, but preferring infinitely the long hours in the open air; making longer excursions to outlying islands, dear, sleepy Torcello standing easily first in their hearts; and best of all, lingering for hours with Beppo,

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either in his own quaint home, or in the fascinating repairing yards of the gondoliers.

"If we must go, it is good to have a fine day." Mr. Carter was standing on the lower step of their hotel, watching the luggage being packed into the gondola for their journey to the station. A long railway journey made an early start imperative, and it was only an hour past the dawn. Hardly a gondola was stirring on the Grand Canal, and the great palaces rose as silently out of the water on either hand as if they were indeed the homes of countless sleeping beauties.

"We have plenty of time, have we not?" asked Mrs. Carter. "Can not we go all the way to the station by way of the Grand Canal?"

Beppo assented with a wide smile. To-day, in honor of his foreign patrons, he had his double gondola, and a "fratello" to help him. The extra effort was as nothing to him. So, through the pale light of the early morning they made their way along the wide, gracious curves of this most wonderful of main streets.

"There should be no such thing as a railway station within reach of Venice, but it has its uses, after all," said Mr. Carter, as he marshaled his family, with Signor Marello's help, through the great train shed to their reserved compartment. As these were to be their last days of journeying together, Signor Marello had been persuaded to give up his independence, and travel with the family.

The children plied him with questions as the train

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whirled them across the long viaduct, and through the level plains of the mainland, but questions and answers were lost in the ever changing view. Padua and Verona were but fleeting pictures as they passed. The lovely glimpse of Lake Garda gave them a promise of what their later journey through the Lakes was to be, and the later afternoon brought them to Milan, ready for one of those little walks that, as Signor Marello said, "would take the train tired out of their bones."

"It is just like any other big town," said Alice. "Is there a Cathedral and Palazzo Publico, like the little towns we have seen?"

"There is certainly a Cathedral," was Mr. Carter's answer, and as soon as the dust of the train was brushed away, they drifted toward the wide Piazza, where the wonderful mass of white marble rose, fair and cool, to face the western sky.

"What a contrast to Saint Mark's!" said Mrs. Carter. "Do you know, Alice, I am beginning to think that all these people that we call by the one name, Italian, are as different and distinct as our many kinds of Americans."

"Do you mean, Mother, that it isn't so surprising that they fought long ago, as it is that they don't fight now?" asked Jack.

"I did not mean to put it quite so bluntly, but after all, you have expressed my sense of the differences between the people of the north and the south, between the sea-faring folk and the hill-dwellers."

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"Do you mind if we become hill-folk, for the moment, and climb up on the Cathedral roof?" asked Mr. Carter.

"Ho, ho!" chuckled the twins, "Father really wants to climb something."

"It is not so much the climbing that I want to do. I want to get there, and we must hurry, if we are to keep pace with the sun. It must be an hour above the horizon, or they will not let us make the ascent. They would not trust us up there in the dusk."

It was a quick climb, but not a hard one, and the Carters found themselves high in the air, amid a very forest of marble statues and pinnacles, with such a wealth of view on every side that it was hard to tell which way to look first.

"Oh, the mountains, the mountains," cried Kate, stretching her arms out toward them. In the clear light of the late afternoon, they lay all along the northern horizon, rising, peak upon peak, against the pale blue sky.

"You are going to climb that wonderful barrier in a few days," said Signor Marello, "and go on into a new world, leaving Italy, and your Italian friends far behind you, down here in the southern sunshine."

"Where do we go across?" asked Kate, turning eagerly from one point of the compass to the other. "Over there, well to the left," answered her father. "We are going to do the good old-fashioned thing, and cross the Alps in a post-chaise, or in something as near to one as we can find."

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"Wouldn't you like to fly over, Jack?" asked Alice.

Mademoiselle shivered slightly. "Do not say it, Miss Alice. The man who attempted it lost his life, just as he was nearing his journey's end. The marvel is that he had the courage to begin it."

Answering the custode's call, they came down from the beautiful upper world, into a modern city of pavements, and brightly lighted shops, the Milan of to-day, given over to manufactures, to bustling barter and trade, the center of Italy's busy north, where men value their art treasures, but dearly love their industry and success.

From Milan, a short train journey took them to Como, where Signor Marello begged to be allowed to return home, but the children clung to him. "Go with us to the edge of Italy," begged Robert, "then you can go back."

"Would you leave me, a poor southerner, alone, up there in the snow, for a big Saint Bernard dog to rescue, and bring home?" he cried. "You have no heart!"

"Come with us at least as far as Stressa, and see us off for our long drive across the mountains," said Mrs. Carter, "and then we can drive away, cheating ourselves with the pleasant thought that perhaps, after all, you will meet us at our destination, as you used to do down in Italy."

"To Stressa, I will go," was his reply, accompanied with the rare smile that, as Alice said once, seemed to "light candles behind his eyes," "and

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that other meeting shall be a pleasant fancy in my mind as well. Perhaps sometime, it will happen."

So, for two days more the famous open-air history class went on, as by boat, and light railway, they traveled from Como along the chain of lovely lakes, to Stressa, opposite the beautiful Islands. Alice, to her delight, added another interesting personality to her collection of saints, as she somewhat irreverently called them. That the three exquisite little islands, in Lake Maggiore, should bear the family name of a saint, seemed to her most curious, but that that same Carlo Borromeo should have had one uncle who was a pope, and another uncle who was a pirate, fascinated her.

"I want to stay here longer," she said, "and learn more about them all. It is a shame to go away just as we are getting really intimate with the country."

"We're surely coming back," said Robert, "because of that penny in Trevi. Besides," he added philosophically, "if we worry about wanting to turn back into Italy, we can not go on and see the Saint Bernard dogs on the mountains."

"Robert has the best of it, children. The man who goes on always finds something to make up for the things he is losing."

Going on proved to mean a charming drive from Stressa to Domodossola, a drive that took them through a smiling and prosperous country, giving them occasional backward glimpses of the lake, and the constant companionship of a merry little river.

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Market Place—Varallo

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A night's rest at Domodossola, and everyone was ready, bright and early, from the head of the family, down to the last of the four horses, for the long pull up over the Simplon Pass. "You can go through it by tunnel, and save time and money, if you wish," said Mr. Carter, "but nothing can equal the beauty and wonder of this drive."

On and on they went, and ever up and up, their road keeping close company with the swift little river, that seemed to take much credit to itself for having helped to make the great cleft between the mountains. On all sides, these mountains rose, sheer and water-scarred. The countless brooks, that had started out so valiantly to join the main stream, were blown away into spray as soon as they left the shelter of the woods and came into the open at the precipice edge.

At the village of Iselle, two courteous officials stopped the carriage for the necessary examination. They spoke to the driver in Italian, but addressed Mr. Carter in French.

"Oh," cried Alice, with a catch in her breath, "they are not Italians! We have left Italy."

As the carriage went on along the main street of their first Swiss town, Alice and Jack stood up, hand in hand, looking longingly back at the road by which they had come.

"It has been such a lovely time!" sighed Alice.

"Don't you wish we could have them all with us here?" asked Jack, knowing that there was no need to explain his thought. "Miss Kenyon and

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Miss Lulu, ' Mr. Painter,' Signora Bianchi and Allessandro, little Caryl, and Signor Marello."

"There's a lot of comfort in those pennies in Trevi," answered Kate.

Robert said nothing, but swallowed hard, pinning his faith on finding some Saint Bernard dogs at Simplon.

THE END

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